A

Modeſt Plea

FOR THE

CLERGY;

WHEREIN

Is Briefly conſidered, the Original, Antiquity, Neceſſity.

TOGETHER

With the Spurious and Genuine Occaſions of their *preſent Contempt.*

by Lanc. Addiſon. S.T.B

Honor Sacerdotii, firmamentum potentiæ.

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IMPRIMATUR.

G. Jane. R. R. D. Hen.
Epiſc. Lond. à ſacris dom.

To the Right Honourable

Sir *JOSEPH WILLIAMSON*,

Principal Secretary of STATE, and one of His Majesties most Honourable Privy Council. *&c.*

SIR,

I Do not here imploy your Name either to rescue these Papers *from contempt, or to raise in the Reader an expectation of meeting in them something fit to be offer'd to such a Personage; but out of great* assurance *that your Honour will readily grant them your* Protection, *as beeing honestly designed for the Vindication of that* Order of Men, *toward whom*

whom your Respects are constantly manifested; and through the sides of whose Contempt both Church and State have ever received their deepest Wounds.

If by this short Discourse I may serve God and the Truth, I have my End: but shall think my Return full of Reward, if Your Honour shall please to approve thereof, and give me pardon for the Address.

That you may long live *to be under Our Gracious Soveraign, an happy Instrument of Peace and Prosperity to this Church and Nation, is the hearty Prayer of,*

Your Honour's most humble
and most obliged
Servant.

TO THE

READER

I *Have little hopes to charm the Reader with a Preface, and think it to as little purpose to Court him into a favourable Opinion of the ensuing* Plea. *For when I have said what I can, he will judge and think what he pleaseth. Let him free me from the* Er-

rata *of the Press, and I will stand to his Mercy for the rest.*

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The

The Introduction.

IF there were not in man a natural desire to convey something of himself to Posterity, and that his Memory might survive his Ashes; we had never heard of the *Egyptians* expending their Treasures in Pyramids, nor of the *Greeks* and *Romans* bestowing their Wealth and Care in Statues, Monuments and Inscriptions. And this desire is so naturalized into all Qualities of men, that even the poor *Statuary* express'd no less, when he so cunningly placed his Name in the *Image* of his God, that it might last as long as that Master-piece of his Art. And yet men are not more ambitious of Memory than Fame: as is clearly to be seen in those very persons,

who though never ſo careleſs of a vertuous Converſation, are yet marvellous greedy of that Reputation which is its natural appendage.

Nor can this be any matter of our Admiration, when it is duly conſidered, That Reputation goes further than Power: and that men are ſerviceable, or otherwiſe, according to the Opinion which is had of their Perſons. "For, let two men "(ſaith that Oracle of the Chair and "Pulpit) ſpeak the ſame words, give "the ſame advice, purſue the ſame buſineſs, drive the ſame deſign, with equal right, equal means, equal diligence, and every other thing equal; yet commonly the ſucceſs is "ſtrangely different, if the one be well "thought of, and the other labour of "an ill report. So that he loſeth the "chief advantage of his Cauſe, who "loſeth the good Opinion of his Perſon.

And though a good Opinion of mens Perſons be of great moment in all ranks of men, yet in none can it be of greater, than

than in the *Clergy*. For if we take our measures from the things wherein they deal, the Credit of their Persons is very highly considerable; because thereon, in a great measure, depend the success and belief of their Office, and consequently the welfare of Religion; which with no small numbers of men, hath just so much Belief, as its Ministers have Credit. And yet we see no Order of men, upon every slight and frivolous occasion, so scornfully exposed as the Clergy; and that not seldome too for doing those very things, which with equal Esteemers, ought to be the matter of their Commendation and Reverence. For let Clergy-men, with a zeal and impartiality becoming their Function, press the due exercise of Holiness and Vertue, and the forsaking those courses of vicious and ungodly Living, wherewith so many are debauched; let them (following the method of the Gospel) teach us to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and our obligation to live soberly, righteously, and godly all the time of

our being upon Earth: let Clergy-men (I say) conscientiously pursue these and the like Instances of their Office, and men commonly deal with them, as the *Greeks* dealt with their two Gods, *Hercules* and *Mercury*, when they worship't the one with reviling Speeches, and the other with casting Dirt and Stones at his Image.

Now, when with not a little resentment I seriously consider, that the Contempt of the Clergy is not the ruffianly and boorish Humour only of the Rude and less-Civilized, but even of many of those, who would be looked upon as the *Great Lights* of Deportment, and the Refin'd and Philosophical Persons of the Age (moved with this Consideration) I began to stagger in my good Opinion of the Clergy, and to suspect there might be sufficient matter for the Tempest, especially when I saw it raised against them by persons of too much seeming Genteelness and Philosophy, to pour Contempt upon any without all just Cause or Pretence.

And

And yet fearing to be seduced with popular Examples, and unwarily to imbibe a groundless prejudice against that *Order* of Men, for which I have ever retain'd so Singular a Reverence and Esteem: I thought it the most Christian and Manly method, not to take upon trust a thing of so great Importance; but by a plain and short research into the Circumstances of the Present Clergy, to try if any thing might be met with to justifie that *Obloquy* and *Contempt* which is heapt upon them. And for a more methodical procedure, I have cast my *Thoughts* into the ensuing Chapters.

CHAP. I.

Of the Name, and Original, &c. of the Clergy.

AS no Nation was ever yet read of, ſo infidel and profane, as to live without all belief of ſome Deity, and profeſſion of ſome Religion; ſo there was never any Religion that had not *Separate Perſons* to whom was committed the *Power* and *Care* of *preſcribing*, *directing*, and *adminiſtring* the *Rites* thereof, and whom by an eaſie Figure we may call their Clergy. For the Name coming of *Clerus*, naturally ſignifying a Lot, Patrimony, or Heritage, may inoffenſively be given both to the Jewiſh and Heathen Prieſts; whoſe attendance upon Religion was their Subſiſtence and Imployment.

But in the firſt times of Chriſtianity the word *Clergy* was ſolemnly adopted into

into the Family of Religious Titles, and made to denote the Church, (or whole Body of Believers) which being Gods peculiar inheritance, was called his *Clerus*, or Clergy. And this acception of the word is ſo well approved of by ſome Modern Writers, that they wiſh the Fathers had ſtill continued it in its firſt Latitude, and that they had never appropriated that to the Miniſtry, as being but a part of the Communion, which primitively belong'd to the whole. And yet Maſter *Calvin*, who ſeems moſt offended at this reſtraint of the word, cannot deny its Antiquity; but confeſſes it to have been an ancient Mode of ſpeaking, to call the whole Order of Eccleſiaſtical Miniſters by the Name of Clergy.

But not to ſaunter away time in ſounding of Puddles, it ſufficeth our preſent purpoſe to take notice, That thoſe Provinces among the *Romans* over which they ſet Procurators, Prætors and Proconſuls, were ſtyled *Cleri*. And that in alluſion to this acception

of the word, the Charge or Portion aſſigned by Lot to *Matthias*, whither, as moſt conceive, he was to go preach the Goſpel, was called Κλῆρος Διακονίας καὶ Ἀποστολῆς, the Lot of Miniſtry & Apoſtleſhip. And the ſeveral places whither the Apoſtles went to plant the Goſpel, were their Κλῆροι, or Provinces; which after they had converted them to the *Faith*, they were to inſtruct and govern. But in this Government they were carefully to avoid the Exaction and Covetouſneſs notorious in the *Roman* Prætors, who minded nothing but to gripe and ſqueeze wealth out of the people, therewith to enrich themſelves: but on the contrary to take care of their Provinces, as Shepherds of their Flocks; uſing ſuch moderation and clemency as might move the people to obey them, not of conſtraint, but with a *willing mind*. And in imitation of theſe Κλῆροι of the Apoſtles, ſome have conjectured that their Succeſſors had Provinces allotted to their Government and Inſtruction; and that from the ſame *Cleri*, the

per-

perſons who taught and ruled them, derived the appellation of *Clergy*. There is indeeed a *Learned Writer*, who by no means can be induced to admit of theſe *Cleri* or Provinces, but with many probabilities has labour'd to refute them, in the Sixth Chapter of his *Irenicum*. But whether Κλῆρος Ἀποστολῆς doth ſignifie the *Office*, or *Province* of Apoſtleſhip, doth not at all concern our preſent purpoſe, ſeeing that either of the two is enough to occaſion the Name we ſpeak of.

But beſides this *Roman* account of the word, we have another from the *Hebrews*: among whom that we render Κλῆροι, ſignified thoſe Portions which fell by Lot to any in the diviſion of an Eſtate or Country. Thus in the Diviſion of *Canaan*, when the Patriarchs received their Κλῆροι, or portions in Land, God appointed none unto *Levi*, but made himſelf his *Lot* and *Poſſeſſion*. And when the whole World was divived into *Hebrew* and *Pagan*, God chuſing the former to profeſs his Worſhip, he made them his Κλῆρος, or people of his

his inheritance, *Deut.* 4. 20. And those of the *Jews* who believed the Gospel, are, according to St. *Peter's* intimation, God's Lot, of whom he took possession, as of a Patrimony assigned to his most holy Service. And after this also, such among the Believing *Jews* as were *ordain'd* for the Ministry, were by way of Eminence called the Κλῆρος, or Clergy of God. Because when they were admitted to Holy Orders, they were set apart and devoted to his *Solemn Worship*, and thereby became his more *peculiar Portion*. Like those whom God, in *Numb.* 16. separated from the Congregation, to bring them near to himself, to the service of the Tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the Congregation, to Minister unto them.

And any of these notices of the word which have been already mention'd, I take for a clearer occasion of its application to the Ministry, than that of *David's* distribution of the Priests into several Courses. Which hapned upon the death of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, when there re-

remain'd no more Sons to *Aaron* but *Eliazar* and *Ithamar*. In whoſe two Families the ſucceſſion of the Prieſts was preſerved. At which time *David*, according to the number of people in each Family, made his Diviſion. Now this Diſtribution being made κλῆρος, or by *Lot*, ſome have thought that all thoſe have from thence been called *Clergy*, whoſe *Office* was to *Miniſter* in Holy Things.

But what ever was the occaſion of the Title of *Clergy*, its firſt application to the Eccleſiaſtique Miniſtry was Significant and Laudable, not to ſay Sacred and Divine, and ſuch as even Malice it ſelf can make no Topick to traduce or contemn thoſe that bear it.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Antiquity of the Clergy: a rational account of, and inquiry into the Inſtitution, &c.

HAving conſider'd the native ſignification of the word, which according to *Epictetus* is the beginning of knowledge; the next thing by the propoſed Method to be examined, is the Antiquity of the Clergy; which is ſo redoubtable that it may ſeem meer trifling to attempt its demonſtration. For indeed the Antiquity of the Clergy is to be placed among thoſe Verities, which are more manifeſt and known of themſelves, than by all can be alledged for their Manifeſtation. And therefore whoſoever ſhall deny a matter of ſuch evidence and univerſal acknowledgement, as that now ſpoken of, he ought to be reckon'd for a meer Sceptick Wrangler, unworthy of confutation, and an enemy to the common ſentiments of all Mankind,

kind, which muſt ſuffer an abſolute defection, and all the impreſſions of Univerſal Nature and Religion be blotted out, ere that we now ſpeak of can be evacuated.

But yet when we ſeriouſly conſider the unhappy *genius* of the Age wherein we live, and that it is our hard lot to fall into thoſe *perillous times* wherein not only ſome inferiour Points, but the whole frame of Religion is ready to be brought in *queſtion*, and to be thought no more than a meer Engine of Government; we can ſcarce hope, upon this ſad reflection, that the Inſtitution of the Clergy ſhould meet with any higher eſtimate. And, I hope, it will not be deem'd meer Melancholy to imagine, That there is a race of men who will not be coy and ſqueamiſh to make the *Calling* of the Clergy, as well as the Belief of a God, to be wholly grounded upon ſome blind Tradition, ſet on foot by ſome crafty Politick; who by the Doctrine of *Obedience* and *Submiſſion*, daily inculcated by this *Order* of *Men*, might

might be the better able to awe a ſilly ſheepiſh World; and to render it more tractable to his purpoſes.

But ſuch as are ſo far taken with this fine Conceit, as to think that the Inſtitution of the Clergy is nothing but a blind Tradition broach't by ſome cunning States-man, I would have them to anſwer me without doubling, who was the Author of this Tradition? When did it commence? How came theſe men to be ſo wiſe as to diſcover and know that which for ſo many years already paſt, none was able to find out? What was there to guide and inſtruct the World before this blind Tradition? Who ſet this Tradition firſt on foot? and before it was ſet on foot, was there no Clergy, or were they unneceſſary? At what Period became the Clergy uſeful? and why then and not before? But when the cunning States-man broach't this Tradition, by what means did he induce men to believe him; and that too in a caſe which was clear contrary to their former judgement, and to the judge-

ment

ment of all the Generations that ever went before them? Did he compel them to it by force, and gain the day by dint of Sword? then where is the Story of his Atchievements? what Monuments preſerve the memory of his Battels and Victories? where and in what *Æra* did this *Mighty man* live, who did thus over-awe the World?

But if the Politician moved men by Reaſon to believe him, we muſt needs grant the Reaſons to have been wonderfully clear and weighty, that could perſwade the whole World to come off from their old Opinion, and ſo far to part with their Liberty, as to ſet over them an Order of Men, whom they knew from the deſign and tenour of their Function, would fill their minds with fear and awe, and put a curb upon their carnal Wills, reſtrain their darling Luſts, bound their worldly Intereſts, obſtruct the ſtream of their Natural Inclinations, and at once abridge them of all their wonted Licences. But if the Politician did move men to receive the

the blind Tradition of a Clergy meerly upon the account of the reaſonableneſs of the thing it ſelf, then is this ground enough both to acknowledge and reſpect the Function. But what did the States-man deſign in ſetting afoot ſuch a Tradition? Had he any regard therein unto the good of the World? Did he convince Mankind that a Clergy was truly neceſſary to the Solemnity of Holy Rites, preſervation of Religion, and to the promotion of the Peace and Welfare of Government among men? If ſo, then tell me, did he ſay the truth, or did he lye? If he ſaid truth, then we ought to believe him, and conſequently to aſſert the Clergy upon the account of Truth: if he told a lye, then is it for the good of the whole World to believe a lye. For if it be a lye to ſay, That the Inſtitution of the Clergy is nothing elſe but a blind Tradition, ſet on foot by ſome crafty States-man, on purpoſe to awe the World by their Miniſtry, and to keep it Honeſt and Peaceable, Obedient and Submiſſive, then

is

is a Lye the foundation of all these Felicities. Or if it be true to say thus, yet we are still to reverence the Clergy, because they are the Channel conveying so many benefits to the World, &c. But to proceed.

That the foundation of all Religion consists in the belief of a God, is so universal an Article, that even those Persons and Nations who differ most from one another, and that too in no ordinary points of Religion, do unanimously accord in this, That there is a God, whom we are bound to labour to please and honour, and to fear to offend and provoke, out of a hope to be made happy by him. And as to those who have opposed the Belief of a God, they have been so very few, and commonly so vilely vitious, that the World hath been greatly weary of them, and thought them of so little Credit, that they could never perswade it, that they were in earnest. But that their wicked lives tempted them rather to wish that there were no God, than that any reason did

convince them to believe ſo. And as the beſt and wiſeſt of men have agreed in the *belief* of a God, and that Belief is the foundation of all Religion: ſo they have likewiſe acknowledged, That Religion was to be expreſſed in the ſolemn worſhip of that God whom they believed. And to the end that this Worſhip might be truly *Solemn*, they likewiſe held, That it was to be publickly celebrated in *appointed places, at ſet times, in preſcript forms*, and by *ſelect perſons*. And we find this laſt circumſtance ſo univerſally obſerved by all Nations moderately civilized, that it may ſeem to be founded in the Law of Nature, and to have had none other but God for its Author. Or, if this were otherwiſe, how ſhould it come to paſs that it is almoſt as eaſie to find a people without *Souls*, as without ſome ſort of Religion: or to find any ſort of Religion without reference to a God; or either Religion, or a God, without a Clergy or Separate Perſons to Negotiate the *Holy Ceremonies*? And not to meddle at preſent

ſent with the *Divine Appointment* of *Certain Men* for the adminiſtration and defence of Religion; we will conceive upon what grounds men herein, left unto their own reaſon, might be induced to erect a Clergy, or to conſtitute an Order of men to appoint and perform the publick Solemnities of Religion, and to direct and determine in emergent Caſes.

And we may imagine that the firſt motive hereunto was a mature deliberation of the natural importance and deſign of Religion it ſelf; which was clearly ſeen to bind men to a Solemn & Regular Worſhip of the Deity. Now this Worſhip (they ſaw) could neither be Regular nor Solemn, if there were not ſelect perſons to make it ſo; for things ceaſe to be both, when they become Common; and they muſt needs become Common, when vulgarly mixt and tranſacted with profane, that is, Common Utenſils. And what is not the leaſt conſiderable, thoſe things are in great likelihood not to be done at all, or with no

juſt decorum, which are left arbitrary for any one to do. They conſidered likewiſe the manifold indiſpoſitions uſually accompanying the generality of Mankind, whereby they were render'd very incompetent to handle things Sacred, according to the dignity of their Nature, and intent of their Inſtitution. They ſaw all, That Holy matters were to be kept within a *Sept*, the more decently to ſecure them from being unhallowed by the rude and undiſcerning touch of the Vulgar. For the Holy Offices of Religion are at the ſame time profan'd that they are made Common; which they cannot eſcape, if there be no diſtinction of Perſons obſerved in their Adminiſtration. Men in this affair might likewiſe argue from a Parity of Reaſon; and that if it be for the credit and advancement of all profitable *Arts* and *Profeſſions* to be provided of ſuch *Profeſſors*, *Officers* and *Maſters* as may propagate, inſtruct, and excecute the ſame: then the like muſt be granted to Religion, or elſe we muſt think it to be of

of leſs worth and moment than Secular Profeſſions, and that leſs is required to make a man Religious, than a Pin-maker, and to give him a competent knowledge of the things of God, than of making of a *Horſe-ſhoe*.

Nor doth it here amount to any valuable Objection, that the common right and intereſt, which every one hath in Religion, is ſufficient to entitle them to the publick officiating the Solemn Rites thereof; for by the ſame reaſon every one might gird on the Sword of Juſtice, and become a Publick Miniſter of the Laws, on pretence of the Common Intereſt which he hath therein: the conſequences of which *Hypotheſis* are ſo abſurd and monſtrous, that they carry with them their own confutation.

But that which we may preſume to have been moſt moving in this concern, was the Conſideration of the Common Nature of Mankind; which being far gone in corruptions, is utterly unfit for, and unprovided of that Sanctity which

is required in Religious Addreſſes: upon which conſideration it was deem'd not only ſafe and agreeable, but alſo neceſſary for this faln condition of men, that out of themſelves ſome perſons ſhould be choſen, and by Holy Ceremonies ſet apart, and as it were placed in a middle Station between God and the people, on purpoſe to preſent God with the Peoples Petitions, and to bring down his Bleſſings upon them. And though the beſtowing of Gods Bleſſings depends upon his own free act, and that the acceptance of ſuch Petitions as are made by ſuch perſons in behalf of the people, is to be known by ſuch teſtimonies as God is pleaſed to vouchſafe; yet that there is a neceſſity of ſuch perſons, who by *Holy Offices* are thus to mediate for the people, is a thing God himſelf was pleaſed to illuſtrate by an everlaſting Example, when he ſent his Son to take our Nature, that he might be qualified to interceed for that Nature which he had taken, and be fit to make nearer acceſſes unto that Seat of Mercy, which we by

by reaſon of our great imperfections, were unfit to approach. And in this ſenſe he is ſtyled, the only Mediator between God and man.

And I humbly conceive it was with reſpect unto this Conſideration, that at the deſigning of Perſons for the Clergy, the Greek Church made this Prayer, Κύριε ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, &c. "O Lord our "God, who becauſe mans Nature is not "able of it ſelf to approach the Glori-"ous Eſſence of thy Godhead, haſt in "thy wiſe Providence and Diſpenſati-"on order'd us Maſters and Teachers of "like Paſſions with our ſelves; whom "thou haſt placed in thy Throne (or in "the Miniſtry of thy Kingdom, the Go-"ſpel) εἰς τὸ ἀνατρέφειν σοι Θυσίαν, &c. "to offer unto thee a Sacrifice in behalf "of the people, &c. The contexture and occaſion of which Oraiſon, I take for no incompetent account of appointing men for the Clergy.

But not to enquire too minutely for the Reaſons that at firſt might probably induce Mankind to conſtitute peculiar

liar perſons for the Service of Religion, we may conceive that all herein did not follow the ſame *Light*. But that ſome Nations were hereunto perſwaded by the more durable and regular principle of Reaſon: Others, by an Univerſal Tradition, which will laſt as long as either we reverence our Anceſtors, or think not our ſelves wiſer than all that lived before us. Others no doubt, imitated herein ſome Nation, which they eſteemed wiſe, ſober, and diſ-intereſſed. But without any peremptory determination of the Motive, we are moſt certain of the thing, and that ever ſince the Creation a Deity, Religion, and Prieſthood, do as mutually infer each other, as the moſt *natural Relations*.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Out of what Rank and Condition the Clergy were elected, among the Jews and Pagans: the reſpect ſhowen them, &c.

HAving thus briefly ſurmiſed ſome of the more probable inducements for the Inſtitution of a Clergy; we come next to examine what manner of perſons were uſually made choice of for that Office; and what reſpect was given them, when they were once therewith inveſted. And limiting this Remark to the Times antecedent to our Saviours *coming in the fleſh*, we know that all Religion was then either of *Jew* or *Gentile*. And beginning with the *Gentiles*, we read how the Sons of their Princes were educated for the *Prieſthood*: That their Kings did exerciſe this Office: That in their Sacrifices there was among the *Romans* a peculiar Office aſſigned unto the King. And we find that when *Numa*,

ma, to give more Splendour and Credit to Religion, eſtabliſhed many ſorts of *Prieſts* in the *City*, fearing that in proceſs of time the Kings might come to neglect their Office about the Sacrifices, by reaſon of the weighty affairs of State, that might otherwiſe imploy them; he ordain'd the *Flamens* to ſupply the Kings place, who bore the names of the ſeverate Gods, to whom they were conſecrate. And this officiating of their Kings was thought ſo neceſſary, that when they were baniſh't *Rome*, one of the *Prieſtly* Order had the *Name* of King while he was doing his Function, leſt the people ſhould ſuſpect any thing to be lacking in the worſhip of the Gods. Thus they preſerved Royalty in Religion, when it was caſt out of the State: and how unwelcome ſoever it became among the uncertain people, yet they thought it neceſſary to be preſerved in the Prieſthood, which was generally ſo highly valued by the *Romans*, that it was accounted a ſingular honour in their Genealogies, that ſome of their Family had been

been of the *Clergy*. And of this Truth we meet with a pregnant inſtance in *Agrippa*, who writing to *Caius Cæſar*, and ſpeaking of the Honour of his own Deſcent, he told the Emperor, that ſome of his Anceſtors had not only been Kings, but alſo admitted to the Prieſthood. We find likewiſe that that ſort of Prieſts among the *Romans*, called *Augurs*, were choſen out of the *Patricii*, who were the Nobility of *Rome*.

But ſuppoſe the Families out of which the Gentile Clergy were elected, had been as mean as they were certainly otherwiſe, yet to thoſe who were once received unto that Province, they were careful to pay an eſteem and reverence ſuitable to the Sacredneſs of their imployment; and to inſtate them with ſuch Immunities as teſtified they thought them not fit to be treated as the *Vulgus*. Rationally concluding, *That thoſe whom they made choice of for the Service of Religion*, were to be raiſed above the common condition of men, and to be freed from the Cares and Incumbrances of the World.

World. And it will not be here greatly impertinent to obſerve, that the *white Veſtments* of the Heathen Prieſts atteſted their Separation from the *Vility* of the *Many:* and, That the Ring, Staff and Mitre, which were the Enſigns of their Office, were alſo known Symbols of Authority and Honour. And yet in further teſtimony of the reſpect the Gentiles bore their Prieſts, there was none, no not in time of War, that durſt offer them the leaſt violence or abuſe. Inſomuch that it was gone into a *proverbial phraſe* for a barbarous and unnatural War, that it ſpared not the Prieſts, but violated thoſe very *perſons* that carried the Holy Fire before the Army. *Tacitus* ſomewhere ſpeaking of the Prieſts, tells us, that they were not moleſted with the ſniffling Scorns of vitious and ill-bred perſons, but by certain Canons and Laws were ſecured from all *outrage* and *diſreſpect*.

And if any thing be yet needful for a further illuſtration of the Gentiles carriage in this matter, it is ſumm'd up by *Cicero*

Cicero in the Caſe of the Roman *Augurs*: "The right of the *Augurs*, ſaith he, "joyn'd with Authority, is the moſt ex- "cellent in the Commonwealth. And "this I ſay, not becauſe I my ſelf am an "*Augur*, but becauſe it is juſt and neceſ- "ſary ſo to ſpeak. For if we enquire for "their Authority, what can be greater "than to convene and diſſolve the pub- "lick Aſſemblies, and appoint the So- "lemnities of Religion! What more mag- "nificent than to have power to decree "when the Conſuls are fit or unfit to "hold the Magiſtracy! What can be "more religious than to give Inſtitutes "to the people! And yet *Cicero* expreſly affirms all theſe things to have been in the power of the *Augurs*, *Lib.* 2. *de Legib.*

Nor are we to look upon the *Romans* to have affected Singularity in this particular; for we find the *Perſians*, *Egyptians*, and the *great Lights* of the Gentile World, the *Athenians*, to have equall'd, or rather ſurpaſs'd the *Romans*, in the veneration of their Prieſts, whom they

they made the Guides and Counſellors of their *Kings*, and *Judges* and Dividers in Secular Affairs. It were eaſie to be numerous in Examples to this purpoſe, and by an Induction of all the Nations in the World to prove this Reverence of the *Clergy*, whom we read in many Nations to have lived apart from other men, and to have had their *Adyta*, or *Secret Places*, as well as their Gods: the ſolitary Groves where they abode, ſignalizing the *ſeparateneſs* of their Function.

But if all this ſhould be charged upon the Ignorance and Superſtition of the Heathen World, and therefore no more fit to be imitated than their *Polytheiſm* and *Idolatry*; It will then import us in the next place to conſider, what in this caſe was the practice of the *Jews*, Gods own People, whom we cannot ſuſpect of Ignorance or Impoſture, being herein plainly guided and inſtructed of God. And firſt it is obſervable that among the *Jews*, the deſignation of perſons for the Guidance of Religion, was much more ancient

ancient than a Levitical Inſtitution, being practiſed by them from the Beginning. For when Families made *Churches* as well as *Kingdoms*, to be a *Prieſt of the Moſt High God*, or to officiate the Matters of Religion was the *Hereditary Honour*, and *Peculiar Prerogative* of the Firſt-born, or *Chief* of the *Family*. For the ſelling of which Priviledge *Eſau* purchaſed the odious Title of *Profane*. And when the *Jews* were bleſſed with a ſettled Prieſthood, they paid it all imaginable reſpect: beginning and determining all their publick Tranſactions at the Word and *Decree* of their *Prieſts*, making the Honour of that *Office*, the Strength of their Authority, and the Cauſe of their Arms, calling it a *Celeſtial Dignity*, a *Heavenly* and no *Earthly Inheritance*. And the Teſtimonies of what I now ſpeak, are ſo many and known, that both the number and plainneſs will excuſe the proſecution.

Nor were the ancient *Jews* more careful in their reſpect, than in the choice of their Prieſts; for we read in the *Sacred*

Story

Story of one of their Kings, that it was reckon'd in him for a great ſin, that he made Prieſts of the loweſt of the people, which were not of the Sons of *Levi*. He conſecrated whoſoever had a mind, without bearing any reſpect either to *Probity of Manners*, or Honeſty of Deſcent: and that paſſing by the Line of *Levi*, he took thoſe who had neither Right nor Title to the Prieſthood. And what was yet more wicked, ſome are of opinion that he was guilty of what the Canon Law now calls *Simony*, by ſelling the *Offices* of the Prieſt to thoſe who would give moſt for them.

And having thus briefly intimated the practice of both the ancient *Jew* and *Gentile*, in relation to their Choice and Reverence of their Clergy, If we ſhould now draw down the Enquiry to the modern and preſent State of the World; we ſhall find no Nation ſo ſavage and uncivilized, as not to have ſome Officers of Religion, whom they treat with Civility, and make conſiderable in the Intereſt of their State and Government.

The

The preſent *Jews* and *Mahumedans* would furniſh us with *Store* of Matter to this purpoſe, if it were not already (in two late Treatiſes concerning them) done to our hands.

Now, what has been ſaid will enforce us to one of theſe Concluſions, Either that the Rites of Chriſtian Religion are more cheap, ordinary and common than thoſe of the *Jews* and *Pagans*, Or thoſe *Separate Perſons* appointed to celebrate thoſe *Rites* muſt have our Eſteem and Reverence. To ſay that Chriſtian Religion is not the moſt Divine Myſtery that ever came into the World, and that all the parts thereof are in themſelves the moſt excellent and ſublime, and to men the moſt beneficial and agreeable, that ever were made known upon Earth; is as falſe as its greateſt Adverſary, the Father of Lyes. And not to render due regard unto thoſe who are known to be the true Miniſters of Chriſtian Religion, is either to think them leſs worthy than the Pagans thought the Miniſters of their idolatrous Ceremonies;

monies; or to ſhow our ſelves leſs Civil, than the greateſt Barbarians.

CHAP. IV.

A brief account of the Inſtitution of the Levitical Clergy.

THere is nothing more material in the Circumſtances of Religion, than that men ſhould be aſcertain'd that their Spiritual Guides have their Commiſſion and Calling from God: becauſe a doubting thereof muſt unavoidably prove no ſmall prejudice to their Authority and Succeſs. And upon this Conſideration it will be neceſſary to enquire into the firſt Inſtitution of the Clergy, to the end that if we find it to be no leſs Divine, than we have found it to be Rational, the Sacred Honour of its Original might be ſufficient to juſtifie and aſſert it againſt all contempt.

And looking back to the firſt Diſpenſations

ſations of Religion, we find the Prieſthood to have been ambulatory, and the Holy Offices conſign'd to the Firſt-born, or *Chief* of each Family. For the Prieſthood did not begin in *Aaron*, but was tranſlated and conferr'd upon his Family before his Conſecration. For thoſe young men of the Children of *Iſrael*, which offered Burnt-offerings, and ſacrificed Peace-offerings of Oxen unto the Lord (*Exod.* 24. 5.) as they were Prieſts, ſo without queſtion they were no other than the *Firſt-born* to whom the Prieſthood did belong. But as ſoon as God began to conſtitute a *Church*, he began alſo to fix the Prieſthood, and appointed *Aaron* to miniſter the Publick Services. And during the Levitical Diſpenſation the Succeſſion of the Prieſthood was continued in *Aaron*'s Poſterity, and the High-Prieſthood tied to the Line of his Firſt-born, the reſt of his Poſterity being ſimply termed Prieſts, or Prieſts of the *Second Order*.

Now, what is here chiefly to be taken notice of, is *Aarons Call* to the *Prieſt-*

hood, which we are aſſured was from God. So that neither *Aaron* did at firſt, nor any after him could legally, take this Honour to himſelf: But all were called of God. And this Truth we find miraculouſly atteſted in the ſuddain and fearful deſtruction of thoſe who undervalued the Prieſts, and factiouſly uſurp'd their Office. 'Tis true *Aaron*'s Prieſthood was but temporary, and at the appointed Seaſon to expire and determine; yet as long as it did continue, it was lawful for none but thoſe of his *Line* to undertake it: Becauſe God had ſo ordain'd. And this Divine Ordinance of the Prieſthood was ſuch an inviolable obſervation, that even Chriſt, when he came to give himſelf an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a ſweet-ſmelling Savour, and by the Oblation of his own Body made an atonement for our Sins: when Chriſt, I ſay, became an Aaronical Prieſt, and put an end to that ſort of Prieſthood: when he alſo became a Prieſt according to the Order of *Melchizedeck*, which laſts for ever; both were

were by Divine Appointment. As the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* diſtinctly argues out of the *Second*, and the *Hundred and tenth Pſalm*. But here it is worthy our remark, that Jeſus was anointed with the Unction of *Aaron* to the *Sacerdotal Office*, and not called after the Order of *Aaron*: for it is evident that our Lord ſprang out of *Judah*, of which Tribe *Moſes* ſpake nothing concerning Prieſthood, (*Heb.* 7. 14.) or, that no Prieſt ſhould come of that Tribe. But Jeſus was made a Prieſt after a more ancient Order, according to the Prediction of the *Pſalmiſt*, *The Lord hath ſworn and will not repent, Thou art a Prieſt for ever after the Order of Melchizedeck*. But though he were of another Order, yet whatſoever *Aaron* did as a Prieſt, was wholly Typical, and to be fulfilled in the *Meſſias*, as he was a Prieſt. To which he had a double Title, the one of Primogeniture, as the Firſt-begotten of God; the other of Unction, as being anointed unto that Office.

Now, if Chriſt did not glorifie himſelf

ſelf to become an High-Prieſt; if as Man, he did not advance himſelf to that Dignity, but was thereunto advanced by God; then is the *Prieſthood* an *Office* to whoſe undertaking more is required than perſonal Abilities, and which none of *right* can undertake, but either by Gods immediate or mediate Call. For though the meetneſs of the Perſon ought to be looked upon by men, yet we cannot preſcribe unto God, or tell him who are fit to be heard by him in behalf of the people, or whom he ought to entertain in Religious Addreſſes. Nor are we able to yield a reaſon from the nature of the thing, why God ſhould accept of *Aaron* more than of *Abiram*, or the mediation of any one man for many, except the free pleaſure of him that makes the choice. But to return: If the more ſolemn Inſtitution of the Clergy bear date only from the Conſecration of *Aaron*, yet it plainly appears to be Divine, or of Gods own appointment; and during the time of the Moſaical Oeconomy, was ſo Sacred and Inviolable,

violable, that none could invade it under a gentler Penance than *Sudden death*, or a *Leproſie*. And long before this too, I mean before the erecting of the Tabernacle or Temple, and Inſtitution of Prieſthood, when God was ſerved within Private Walls, and the right of Prieſthood in every Family was annexed to the Primogeniture, ſo that the Firſtborn was *Prieſt*: we read but of one, contrary to cuſtom, who aſpired unto it, whoſe ambition therein would have been utterly inexcuſable, if the whole diſpoſal of the matter had not been from God, who loved *Jacob*, but hated *Eſau*, and made the Elder to ſerve the Younger, *Rom.* 9. 12, 13. But though the Levitick or Aaronical Prieſthood was of Divine Inſtitution, yet being wholly Typical, and conſequently to determine, and becauſe it is already paſt and gone; we are next to enquire into the Nature and Conſtitution of that Clergy which ſucceeded it.

CHAP. V.

Of the Inſtitution of the Evangelical Clergy.

WHen the Great Fulfiller of the Lavv, (even the bleſſed Author of our moſt Holy Faith) in a moſt excellent manner made good that Title; and being dravving to the laſt Stage of his life, and together vvith it to put a full end to the *Moſaick Diſpenſation*, and aboliſh both the Sacrifice and Prieſthood in that of himſelf: When (vvithout a Figure) the immutable Clergy of the *Goſpel* vvas to ſucceed into the mutable Clergy of the *Law:* he called thoſe Apoſtles, of vvhom at firſt he made choice, and gave them *Power* to erect and conſtitute a *Church*, and to tranſmit ſuch Povvers unto others as vvere proper for the continuance and propagation of the ſame. Novv, the Commiſſion vvhich Chriſt gave to the Apoſtles to impovver them

them to this end, is the chief thing to be conſidered; and vve meet vvith it at large, as it vvas ſigned by our Saviour immediately upon his Aſcenſion, in S. *Matth.* 28.

18. *All power is given unto me in Heaven and Earth.*

19. *Go ye therefore and teach* (or, *make*) *all Nations* (*Diſciples,*) *baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.*

20. *Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World.*

In vvhich vvords Chriſt firſt aſſerts and declares his ovvn Commiſſion; ſhovving his Apoſtles that vvhat he did, vvas not the reſult of his ovvn private judgement, but the exerciſe of that Authority vvhich vvas given him of his Father: vvho had conſign'd unto him a full Povver of ordering and diſpoſing vvhatſoever belong'd to the Church, of vvhich

vvhich he vvas made the Prince and Head upon his riſing from the Grave; and by vertue of that relation ſtood obliged to provide for the preſervation and encreaſe thereof. But hovv this ſhould be done, is the doubt to be ſatisfied. For Chriſt in his ovvn Perſon could not make this proviſion for the Church, becauſe as to his humane Nature he vvas ſhortly to remove to Heaven, and there to abide until his coming to judge the *quick* and *dead*. Novv vvhatever a man cannot do in his ovvn perſon, muſt be done by deputation, if it be done at all. And therefore Chriſt by his Aſcenſion being become uncapable in his ovvnPerſon to take this care of the Church, he deputed his Apoſtles thereunto, appointing them in his Name and Stead to perform all thoſe Offices, vvhich vvere required to the Eſtabliſhing and Advancement of the Goſpel. Giving them alſo povver to depute others to ſucceed them in the ſame Care, and to deliver dovvn the ſame Povver, ſucceſſively to the end of the World. And to the end that the Clergy

Clergy might not be thought to expire in the Perſons of the Apoſtles, nor they to have died vvithout Succeſſors in the Miniſtry, Chriſt promiſed upon his *Departure, to be with them unto the End of the World.* Which vvords vve vvill take for granted to have been ſpoken to the Apoſtles as they vvere the Clergy, or Miniſters of the Goſpel: and that they vvere not limited excluſively to their Perſons, but in them did belong to the vvhole ſucceſſion of the Clergy. For hovvever the Apoſtles might be vvith Chriſt, he could not be perſonally vvith them, ſo much as unto their death, much leſs unto the end of the World, being ſo ſhortly upon the ſpeech of theſe vvords, to aſcend up into Heaven; vvhereof they themſelves vvere *Undeniable Witneſſes.*

It is likevviſe duly to be conſidered: That Chriſt by his promiſe [lo, I am vvith you alvvay, even unto the End of the World] intended ſome benefits to the Church, vvhich ſhould be of no leſs continuance than the Church it ſelf, and that the

the Apoſtles vvere to be the firſt diſpenſers of thoſe benefits. And if it be demanded vvhat theſe benefits vvere? it may (from the Text) be ſafely replied that they vvere the ſeveral functions of the Clergy, to vvhich the Apoſtles vvere Commiſſion'd; *viz.* Preaching, Baptiſm; Adminiſtration of the Sacrament of Chriſts Body and Blood, the exerciſe of the Cenſures, *&c.* All vvhich vvere to end vvith the Apoſtles, or they vvere not: If they vvere to end vvith the Apoſtles, then has the Church ever ſince the death of the Apoſtles been vvithout theſe Offices, vvhich amounts to no leſs than that there has been no Church ſince their Deceaſe. Or, if they vvere not to end vvith the Apoſtles, but have alvvays been, and are ſtill to be exerciſed, unto the end of the World; then it cannot be denied but there ever have been, and ever muſt be fit Perſons, vvho like the Apoſtles muſt have a juſt power to diſpenſe theſe Benefits, or exerciſe theſe Offices. For no leſs can be conceived to have been intended by Chriſt in his promiſe of being with

with the Apoſtles *alway*, *Even unto the End of the World.* And we ſhall have no temptation to ſuſpect this Interpretation of the *Promiſe*, when we ſhall conſider, firſt, that by the *End of the World*, "*That* '*State* of affairs is to be underſtood, which 'began exactly at Chriſts Reſurrection; 'when all power was given him in Heaven 'and Earth; which was to continue to the 'end of the World, or his coming to Judg-'ment. Next, that the promiſe made unto the Apoſtles had reſpect unto this *State*: and therefore the Benefits promiſed, namely, *Preaching*, *Baptiſm*, &c. were to endure unto the full determination of the ſame.

Thirdly, That ſeeing Chriſt could not poſſibly be with the Apoſtles perſonally, nor they upon Earth, *Unto the End of the World*: There muſt be ſome other way to verifie Chriſts preſence with the Apoſtles, and their being in the World unto the End thereof, both which ſeem to be implyed in the Text. As to Chriſts preſence with the Apoſtles, it is unanimouſly concluded of the *Vicaria preſentia Spiritus*,

Spiritus, in *Tertullians* phraſe, or of making the Holy Ghoſt his Vicar, in ſending him to be with the Apoſtles upon his aſcenſion into Heaven. Which miſſion of the *Spirit* cannot be meant of that that hapned at *Pentecoſt*, when he ſate upon them in bodily appearance, and inſpired them with ſuch extraordinary gifts as were needful for thoſe firſt times of the Goſpel: ſuch as the gift of tongues to inable them to Preach to all Nations in their own Language, and of other Miracles, to confirm the truth of their Doctrin, and to move men to believe it. For if the promiſe of Chriſts being alway with the Apoſtles, were to be underſtood of this miſſion of the Spirit upon them, then it would follow, that Chriſt were ſtill to be thus preſent with the Church, and that extraordinary gifts did ſtill continue, or that he who promiſed, were not faithful. And therefore it is neceſſary that we underſtand Chriſts being with the Apoſtles, of his giving them the Holy Ghoſt to inſtate them with Powers, not only in their own Perſons to

to plant and govern the Church, and to perform all the Offices of the Clergy relating thereunto; but alſo to ordain others unto the ſame Functions, and to give them Authority to do the like *Unto the End of the World.* So that by this promiſe made of his preſence with the Apoſtles, Chriſt provided for a ſucceſſive Clergy, in whom the Apoſtles were to continue, or the Ordinary Miniſtry be preſerved, unto the Conſummation of all things.

And we have no reaſon to be jealous of this ſenſe of our Saviours Words, when we find it univerſally agreed upon, that one great end of ſending the Holy Ghoſt to the Church, was the ſanctifying & ſetting apart of Perſons for the *Work* of the Clergy, and to convey a ſtanding Authority of Ordination of meet perſons to mediate between God and the people: to pray for and bleſs them in the Name of Chriſt: to help their Infirmities by compoſing for them a *Liturgy* according to the Pattern of the Apoſtles, of whoſe *Liturgy* ſeveral paſſages do yet remain.

And

And the Holy Ghoſt doth ſtill impower the Church to Ordain and Conſecrate Perſons for the Miniſterial Office, for the Edifying of the Body of Chriſt. Who when ordain'd, are bound to take heed to themſelves and unto all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made them *Overſeers*, to feed the Church of God.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Spirits Agency in reſpect of the Clergy, &c.

HAving endeavour'd to demonſtrate that the true ſenſe of Chriſts promiſe, *In being with the Apoſtles*, doth reſpect that Authority that the Holy Ghoſt gave them, for appointing a ſettled Miniſtry in the Church, while militant upon Earth: In ſubſerviency to our preſent purpoſe it may not be unuſeful to obſerve, That among all thoſe Offices which the Holy Ghoſt performs for the Church, there is none wherein he ſeems to be more

more intereſſed, or to have a greater agency, than in the qualifying and ſeparation of Perſons for the Prieſthood. Which work indeed is ſo peculiar to the Spirit, and ſo neceſſary for this purpoſe, that even the Great Paſtor and Biſhop of Souls became not a Preacher of his own Goſpel, till he was thereunto Anointed and Conſecrated by the Holy Ghoſt. *Luke* 4. 18. And when the ſame Great Biſhop Ordain'd his Apoſtles, it was according to the tenor of his own Ordination; *As my Father ſent me, ſo ſend I you*; and to ſhew wherein the Similitude conſiſted, he breathed on them, and ſaid, *Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt*, *John* 20. 21, 22. Which clearly implies, that as at his Miſſion from his Father to his Office, he was Anointed, or Conſecrated by the Holy Ghoſt, which viſibly deſcended upon him at his Baptiſm, when he entered upon his Miniſtry: So when the Apoſtles had their Miſſion from Chriſt, and were to enter upon their Miniſtry, they alſo were Conſecrated by the Holy Ghoſt. Which they received not only to *giſt*,

and inable their *Persons*, but also to impower them for their *Office*: as is undeniably evident upon the account of the words immediately following [*Receive ye the Holy Ghost*] which actually instate upon them the Power of the Keys.

'Tis true, after they had thus received the Holy Ghost, and were Commission'd to all the Offices of the Clergy, the Apostles were not immediately to fall upon their Execution, but were bid to stay at *Hierusalem*, till they should receive such Miraculous Gifts, by the visible descent of the Spirit, as should render their entrance upon the Ministry more solemn and remarkable, and their performance thereof more efficacious and convincing: That men seeing the *Wonders* done by the Apostles, none might have the least occasion to doubt of the truth of their Doctrine, or their Authority to Preach it.

But not only in Christs Authorizing the Apostles for the Clergy, but also in their Authorizing others, and so forward; the work is still ascribed to the Holy Ghost. As to the Apostles the matter

ter is evident in the Caſe of *Barnabas* and *Saul*, whoſe ſeparation of them to the Miniſtry, is attributed to the Spirit. And we find the ſame verified of the Presbyters of the Churches of *Aſia*, and in *Timothy* the Biſhop of *Epheſus*. Of whom it is ſaid expreſly, *The Holy Ghoſt made them Overſeers*, *Act.* 20. 28. Which (according to ſome) may ſignifie two things. Firſt, their Ordination to the Miniſterial Office, attributed to the Holy Ghoſt, as to the Original, by whoſe deſcent upon the Apoſtles, they were Authorized to Communicate this Authority, to give Commiſſions to others, who were to ſucceed them in the Dignity and Office of inſtructing and governing the Church. Secondly, it may ſignifie the Act of Deſignation, Election, Nomination to the Miniſtry, which at that time was done by the *Special Revelation of God*, and might properly be attributed to the Holy Ghoſt. And after this latter manner *Matthias* was choſen to ſucceed *Judas* in his Office; and *Saul* and *Barnabas* for the work. *Act.* 1. 24. *Act.* 13. 2. And if we

have recourſe herein to Church Story, we ſhall find how that the *Apoſtles Ordain'd* none of their *Converts* till they were *Tryed* and *Approved* by the Holy Ghoſt. And that when St. *John* was return'd into *Aſia*, he ordain'd every where ſuch as were ſignified by the Spirit. And we are generally told by the Greek Fathers, that the primitive Biſhops did not make *Clergy* of their own Heads, but by the order and command of the Spirit. Which being underſtood according to the diſtinction now mention'd, leaves no place of doubting of the manner or reality of the *Spirits* concernment in ordaining men for the Clergy; eſpecially when it is conſidered, that all the ſorts and degrees of Primitive Eccleſiaſticks, are aſcribed to the *Appointment* of the Holy Ghoſt, *Eph.* 4. 11.

And we have no ground of ſurmiſing that the Holy Ghoſt hath quitted his Intereſt in this great Concern; but rather to believe that he doth ſtill preſide at Holy and Regular Ordinations. Which are that Eccleſiaſtick Generation, whereby the

the Clergy is propagated, the Apoſtles ſtill ſurvive, and Chriſt is ſtill preſent with *them.* And we have no reaſon at all to doubt but that the *Spirit* doth as *Truly*, though not ſo *Viſibly*, aſſiſt at the preſent *Ordering* of Miniſters, as he did at the ſeparation of *Barnabas* and *Saul:* and that Chriſt is as really preſent by the ſame Spirit, as when he breathed *Him* upon the Apoſtles, and thereby gave them Authority for the Work of the Miniſtry.

And to this purpoſe we are to underſtand our own Church, when ſhe bids the Perſons to be *Ordain'd* and *Conſecrated, Receive the Holy Ghoſt for the Office and Work of a Prieſt in the Church of God, now committed to thee, by the impoſition of our hands*, &c. And, *Receive the Holy Ghoſt, for the Office and Work of a Biſhop in the Church, now committed to thee, by the impoſition of our hands*, &c. The Holy Ghoſt in both forms is, I doubt not, to be taken in the ſame ſenſe, and imports no more, but the conferring of Authority for the Execution of the *Offices* there *Specified.*

Which Authority being convey'd by that we call *Orders* and *Conſecration*, is fitly expreſſed by the ſame words, which were uſed by our Saviour in beſtowing the ſame power upon the Apoſtles at his ſending of them forth to Preach the Goſpel, and gather and conſtitute a Church.

I have not as yet met with any thing conſiderable relating to the *Forms* of Ordination uſed in the Ancient Church, but I ſuppoſe they were all agreeable to that our Saviour uſed at the Ordination of the Apoſtles. But the Form of Ordination being only of Eccleſiaſtical Inſtitution, the Churches might inoffenſively vary therein. In the Greek Church the form was to this effect: "*The Divine* "*Grace, which always heals our Infirmities,* "*and ſupplies our wants, doth create or pro-* "*mote* N. *the Venerable Deacon to be a Pres-* "*byter, the Presbyter moſt beloved of God to* "*be a Biſhop.* In the *Weſtern Church* they uſe another Form, wherein they confer upon the Presbyter the power of Conſecrating the Elements in the Sacrament of the

the Holy Euchariſt, and of Binding and Looſing. Our own Church hath a Form peculiar to her ſelf, yet much reſembling the old *Greek* Form, menti-on'd by St. *Clem.* in his *Conſtitutions*, *Lib.* 8. *c.* 16. Wherein the power of Preaching alſo is confer'd upon the Presbyter. And though I am not able at preſent to give a full account of all the Ancient Forms of Ordination, yet it ſufficeth our purpoſe, that none was ever yet met with, wherein the Original and ſupreme power of Ordaining is not attributed to the Holy Ghoſt.

CHAP. VII.

Of the incommunicableneſs of the Offices of the Clergy.

THough what has been ſaid renders the Holy Ghoſts *Intereſt* and *Agency* in the *Separation* of men to the *Calling* of the *Clergy*, to be undeniable, yet there are ſtill ſome who opine the

Miniſtery to be a thing of *Labour* rather than *Honor*, and to which *Abilities*, without Authority, are ſufficient; by which poſition the Concern of the *Spirit* muſt be wholly evacuate, as to yielding any orderly power and certain Method of attaining unto the *Sacerdotal Office*. And though the *Socinian* and *Enthuſiaſt* are the more known and profeſſed Aſſertors of this *Conceit*; yet it is much to be feared that all Contemners of the Clergy are ſowr'd with the ſame leaven. For if they were throughly perſwaded of the Divine Right of the Clergy, and that none can take that Honor unto himſelf, unleſs he be called of God, or by Gods appointment; this one thing might be Charm enough both againſt *Contempt* and *Uſurpation* of the ſame. And men would ſcarce be ſo hardy as to invade or *blaſpheme* this *Calling*, when they ſaw it would involve them in the guilt of Sacriledge and Irreligion. But unto thoſe who would lay that Holy Function Common, which God has placed within a *Sept*, and leave the Prieſthood open to all that will enter it, with-

without further Ceremony, than getting up and Ride: to the ſober Conſideration of ſuch men, I would humbly recommend the enſuing particulars; to the end they may return to a better mind.

And firſt let them duly conſider, how that St. *Paul* ſetting down the Nature of the Church, has ſtyled it the Body of Chriſt. Where he means not a Similar Body, ſuch as Fire, Air and Water, where all the parts are alike and perform the ſame Office; but a body conſiſting of diverſity of Organs for ſeveral Faculties and Operations; ſuch a body as is not one Member but many, knit together with Unity and Charity, as with a Band of Health. St. *Aug. Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 16. *De Doctr. Chriſtian.* The whole fourteenth *Chap.* of 2 *Cor.* is inſpired to this purpoſe, and deſigned to manifeſt, that in the Church of Chriſt, it is as monſtrous & impoſſible for all to be Clergymen, or Teachers and Governors, as for the body of a man to be all *Tongue* and *Eye.* And that it is as prepoſterous and deſtru-

deſtructive for all promiſcuouſly to thruſt themſelves into the Miniſtry, as for the Members of a mans body to deſert their Natural Situation, and all to preſs into the ſame place. The ſame Apoſtle has likewiſe term'd the Church a Building, *Eph.* 2.21. wherein the Stones have their ſeveral and ſeparate places, all being imployed neither in the Foundation, nor the Corner; which ſimilitude relating to the *Congregation* of *Believers*, implies they were not all to bear the ſame Office. 'Tis true, that Chriſtians in general are ſtyled a Royal Prieſthood, and a peculiar people, and a choſen Generation, 1 *Pet.* 2.5. 9. Yet it is alſo true, that this was affirm'd of the Hebrew Nation (*Ex.*19.6.) at the ſame time when God had among them his *Levites*, Prieſts and High-prieſts: And therefore can be now no more of priviledge; and therefore no more Argument, to make all Chriſtians properly Prieſts, than it did the *Jews*: among whom the uſurpation of the Prieſthood was puniſhed to admiration. But the words of St. *Peter* are a clear inſinuation of the excellent

cellent priviledges procured by our Converſion to Chriſtianity; and that like the Prieſts under the Law, who ſpent all their time in Sacrificing, and Religious Offices; ſo we ſhould be conſtant in the ſervice of God in the publick Aſſemblies; which he requires of us, as he did the Sacrifices of the Levitical Prieſts. And in reſpect of that freedome which true Believers have obtain'd from Sin and Satan, and that liberty wherewith they are inveſted by Chriſt: as alſo in regard of that daily ſervice they are to pay him; they are ſaid to be Kings and Prieſts unto God, *Rev.* 1. 6. So that from theſe Texts, ſuch as would intitle all to the Sacerdotal, may alſo inſtate them with the Regal Office.

But without a Figure; The choice of Perſons for the Clergy and the incommunity of that Function, is ſuch an expreſs Doctrin of the *Scripture*, that it may ſeem no leſs ſuperfluous to prove, than it is Sacrilegious to gainſay it. And if we duly weigh the words of the

the firſt Commiſſion, as they occur, *Mat.* 28. they ſuperſede all further confirmation of what we now ſpeak. For they ſo plainly fix the Miniſterial Offices, and make them ſuch, appropriate and Authoritative Acts, as that none but the duly order'd can be blameleſs, and undertake them.

But beſides all this, if according to ſome mens Fancies, Abilities be all that is requiſite to make a Clergy-man; then it is but prudent and reaſonable to make due enquiry into thoſe Abilities, and to be duly inform'd of their Nature and Reality. Now, what Abilities ſoever any man can pretend unto, muſt either be *Infuſed* or *Acquired*. If men aſſume unto themſelves the Prieſts Office, meerly upon the pretence of *Infuſed Abilities*, or *Extraordinary Gifts*; then it is juſt to put them upon the proving ſuch pretences by that ſort of Teſtimony which was ever required in ſuch a caſe: And to make them ſhew their Extraordinary Gifts, by Extraordinary Works: For if theſe pretenders are to be credited upon their

their own bare word, how eaſily will it then be for every bold, facing, confident Fellow, to rub his Forehead, to pretend to Extraordinary Gifts and Abilities, and ſo cozen the World, bely the Holy Ghoſt, (from whom all ſuch real Gifts do come) and conſequently to deſtroy all Order in the Church.

But if theſe Abilities are acquired, be they never ſo excellent, yet they muſt undergo Tryal and Examination, leſt they ſhould be but fancifull and preſumptuous; and when found in the greateſt perfection whereof they are capable, yet they can of themſelves no more make a Clergy-man, than a *Judge* of Aſſizes, or any Secular Magiſtrate; which is a *Power* confer'd upon Abilities.

The next thing which ought herein ſoberly to be conſidered, is the *Charge* undertaken by the Clergy; which all acknowledge to be no leſs than the *Cure of Souls*. For we cannot ſuppoſe the great *Shepherd* of the Sheep who loved them ſo well as to lay down his life for them, would after his departure, leave them to wander

wander up and down, without any to guide or feed them. But that upon his own Deceaſe he committed them to a choſen Clergy, at whoſe hands he at laſt will exact an account of their ſouls. And this his Care we find inſtanced in that ſtrict command he laid upon *Peter* to feed his *Sheep* and *Lambs*. Which the Apoſtle faithfully executed himſelf, and exhorted his fellow Miniſters to do the like, 1 *Pet.* 5. 1, 2. Now if thoſe who are ſo forward to take upon them the Miniſterial *Office*, would maturely revolve that it brings with it a *Charge* of Souls, of which one day they muſt give an account, this might perhaps not a little cool their heat: and the due apprehenſion of the weightineſs of the burden, would allay the preſumption of their Abilities. Nor will it leſs deſerve their Conſideration, that if all have a Right to the Miniſtry, then have all a Right to be maintain'd by it, which St. *Paul* proves by the Law of *Moſes*, forbidding to muzzle the *Ox* that treads out the Corn; by the Law of Natural Reaſon, allowing unto the Plow-

man,

man, and Threſher, the hopes of receiving the due Fruits of their Labour, and Rewards of their Pains: and he concludes that upon terms of common Equity, they who labour for the good of others in things Spiritual, ought in reaſon to be rewarded and maintain'd by thoſe for whom they labour. And as the Prieſts under the Law, lived of the things of the Temple, and were allowed for their attendance upon the Altar, a Portion of the Sacrifices which there they offer'd; even ſo the Lord who hath the free diſpoſal of all mens Eſtates, hath given an Aſſignment to thoſe that Preach the Goſpel, of ſo much out of their Auditors Subſtance, as may decently maintain them. And therefore according to the Apoſtles arguing, we muſt deal worſe with the Clergy, than with our *Oxen*, Plow-men, and Threſhers, and violate the Laws of God, Nature and Reaſon, if we deny them a Right to be maintain'd by the Miniſtry, to whom we grant a Right to diſcharge it. And that double honor

not allotted to the Elders who labour well in the Word and Doctrin, is understood by some, of Respect and Maintenance, and by all, of an ample allowance, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. And this is an Argument which will make men at least so provident, as not to admit more to be Preachers, than they are willing and able to maintain. And we must own it for a singular piece of bounteous Wisdom in the Almighty, to settle a subsistence for the Clergy, that without the Interruption of Worldly Cares they might attend to *Reading*, *Exhortation* and *Doctrin*. And when God left out *Levi* in the Division of the *Land*, it was highly to his advantage, for in stead of a Twelfth part God appointed him a Tenth, and that too upon such terms, as made his Portion much more considerable than any of his Brethrens. And by this allowance the Priests were not only freed from the distracting troubles of the World, but also enabled to the obliging Offices of *Charity* and Almsdeeds; and not only apt to teach, but also given

given to Hoſpitality. Which are ſtill loudly called for at the hands of the Clergy, even by thoſe who grudge them thoſe Revenues, without which they will be able to do neither. But I leave this, to return to our men of great Abilities; whom I heartily requeſt, to imploy their parts in helping the weaker brethren, by the Methods of Peace, Submiſſion, and Charity: but if nothing will ſerve them but the Offices of the Prieſthood; and that either through *Envious Faction*, or *miſtaken Zeal*, they will be fingering the Hallowed Cenſor and the *Holy Fire*, I then leave them to the Conſideration of their Anceſtors, *Corah* and *Uzziah*, for Inſtruction or Affrightment.

In the laſt place, I would gladly have thoſe who would have all without diſtinction to perform the Offices of the Clergy, to conſider the many inconveniencies which will unavoidably befall both Church and State, Religious and Civil Government from ſuch an *Enormous* Principle.

Firſt, As to the Church and Religion, the liberty of letting men, preſumptuous of their Abilities, to take upon them to become *Teachers*, will prove the ready way to make even Preaching it ſelf, which ſome account the *All of Religion*, to become weak and Contemptible; by being expoſed to all the incongruities, follies, dotages, and impoſtures of the *Ignorant* and *Confident*, and of the *Crafty* and *Deceitful*: and make the *Scripture* it ſelf, the foundation and rule of Religion, hourly liable to ſuch freakiſh and wild Expoſitions, as will make it moſt unlike it ſelf, and leaſt able to be that for which it was deſigned: Even a compleat Rule of Faith and Converſation, Truth and Holineſs. And that there is more than a poſſibility of what I ſpeak, thoſe have ſufficiently inform'd us who have expounded *Scripture* out of its Sences, and have ſo Commented the *Laws* thereof till they have in them no manner of *Obligation*. Who have made the Creation of the World an Allegory, the Redemption of Man

a Metaphor, and Heaven and Hell but a Trope. And if we were to trace all the Hereſies from the time of *Simon Magus* down to our own, we ſhall finde them to have riſen from making Gods *Word* to ſpeak according to the *Intereſt* and *Paſſion* of ſuch men, as had once got into their hands the liberty of teaching the people. Men have generally heard of *Julians* contrivance to ruine Chriſtianity, and that it was a granting all the Sects thereof a liberty of *Aſſembling* when they pleaſed, and teaching what they would. *Ut quiſque nullo vetante Religioni ſuæ ſerviret intrepidus*, (Ammianus Marcellinus *Lib.* 22.) to give every one, who pleaſed, a liberty to promote their own opinions, & ſerve the Intereſt of their Sect. Now it cannot be hoped that where Religion is ſettled in the greateſt *Purity* and *Truth*, it ſhould there continue long in that State, if every one without danger of puniſhment may falſify and corrupt it. And how this will be prevented where all that pleaſe may *preach*, I am not yet able to imagine.

And as this Indiſcrimination of Teachers will thus expoſe Religion to perpetual Corruptions; ſo will it have but little better influence upon the peace and ſafety of the State. For when every one hath a liberty to Teach what and whom he pleaſeth, we may conclude from the natural Pride of men, they will deſire to raiſe a *Sect* and become Head of a *Party*. Over whoſe Conſciences when they have once got a competent Power, it will not be long till they will have both their perſons and fortunes at their Devotion. And their Gather'd Churches will be ſoon trained into an Army, there being no fitter materials of New Troops, than New Proſelytes. Who being imployed in the firſt warmth and briskneſs of their Zeal, will not ſtick at any Attempt tending to the Advancement of their *Way*; and to the removal of whatſoever obſtructs their deſign. And though the pretence of all this be *Conſcience* and *Zeal for the Lord*, the *Removal of Abuſes*, and *The publick Welfare*; Yet every Male-content will help to encreaſe

creaſe the Cry, and all the Sons of Ambition, Covetouſneſs, Envy and Revenge, will empty themſelves into the Faction. And thoſe who leaſt Care for Religion, will yet make it their pretext to ruine that which is *Eſtabliſhed*, and therewith the State. The ſad truth of which Obſervation dear-bought experience doth every where atteſt.

Now, if this levelling of the Clergy, by granting to every one that liſts leave to invade their Office, will inevitably prove fatal both to Religion and Government, *Church* and *State*; it will then be the beſt Policy and moſt certain intereſt to maintain the *Prieſthood* in its primitive *Eſteem*. And ſeeing too that the *Calling* of the *Clergy* is of Divine Authority, it muſt needs render all pretences of contemning it upon the Account of its Original, Atheiſtical and Blaſphemous; and all Uſurpation thereof, Sacrilegious and Profane.

And having in the antecedent Diſcourſe offer'd at ſomething of Apologetick in behalf of the Clergy in General,

by proving the *Divine Authority*, and Catholick Eſteem, of their Calling: So the ſucceeding Sheets deſign a more particular Apology for the preſent Clergy of this Church. Which may be plainlieſt done by anſwering the ſpurious, and ſetting down the real occaſions and grounds of their Contempt.

CHAP. VIII.

How the Clergy in all Ages have undergon Contempt: The Character of their Contemners, &c.

BEfore we enquire into the Pretences which are commonly brought for the Contempt we ſpeak of, it will be expedient to conſider, that the deſpiſing of the Clergy has been the unhappy carriage of other Ages as well as our own. Which is a thing ſo deplorably manifeſt, that we need not much inſiſt, either upon its proof or declaration. For if we ſoberly conſult the Oracles of God, they will

will yield us undeniable atteſtations, that to Contemn the *Stewards of Myſteries*, is a diſeaſe ſo Epidemical in reſpect of time, that it may ſeem to have been intailed upon the ſeveral Generations of Mankind, as *Gehazi*'s Leproſie was upon his Children. For if we begin with *Enoch*, who was but the Seventh from *Adam*, and the firſt Clergy the Scripture mentions, though he was one, whoſe upright Converſation obviated all Exceptions, as *Walking with God and pleaſing him*; and one who became an Example of Religiouſneſs to all Generations: Yet for all this, he in his own Perſon met with Obloquy and hard Speeches, and propheſied of men who would ſo treat the Clergy until the Conſummation of all things. Upon whom God at laſt ſhall ſend his Holy Myriads, infinite Armies of Angels to take Vengeance.

Nor did it fare better herein with *Noah*, notwithſtanding that he alſo *Walked with God and pleaſed him, and was a pledge of the World, and a preacher of Righteouſneſs*: And ſo wanted nothing to recom-

mend him to the reſpect and reverence of his Age. Yet for many years he was ſo far deſpiſed, that none took notice of his Sermons, unleſs to deride and pervert them. For we read not of any who were reclaim'd by his preaching, but that all remain'd in as much carnal Supineneſs, obſtinacy and diſobedience, as if *Noah* had never told them of their imminent danger and deſtruction by a deluge; and by his building of an *Ark*, given them a ſenſible demonſtration of what he foretold. For they ate and drank, and followed their old trade of taking ſtrange Women to their Wives, and regarded not till the Flood came and ſwept them all away. If I might here inſert *Moſes* among the *Prieſts*, becauſe he was ſent from God to preach deliverance to *Iſrael*, we ſhall find him every where vilified and contemn'd. The firſt Eſſay of his Meſſage was entertain'd with a petulant queſtioning of his Authority; *Who made thee a Judge over us?* And through the whole *Sacred Legend* of his *Life*, we find him continually oppoſed and ſpoke againſt by

by *Conjurers*, *factious* and *gain-ſaying Zealots*, and the *humorſome* and *uncertain multitude*. And as to the *firſt* High-Prieſt, the behaviour of *Corah* and his adherents toward him, is a ſufficient teſtimony and illuſtration in this caſe.

And letting paſs the Ancient Patriarchs, who had no part of their life free from *Contumelies* and *Reproaches*; if we look into the times of the Prophets, we may learn the Lot of them all, from that of *Jeremy*, who was mock't, jeer'd, and droll'd upon, meerly for being a Prophet of the Lord. But we need not faſten upon Particulars, becauſe we find by the general account given of the Prophets ſufferings, that they were no leſs than cruel Mockings & Scourgings, Bands and Impriſonments, and the moſt exquiſite kinds of Martyrdomes; being deſtitute, afflicted and tormented.

Nor were the Clergy better dealt with in the times of the Goſpel: For in the years of its greateſt efficacy, when the Apoſtles preach'd it with the pureſt zeal, nobleſt induſtry, wiſeſt courage, and in the

the true *Evidence and Demonſtration of the Spirit*, they were traduced for the vileſt Offenders, and accounted no better than the off-ſcouring & Laughing-game, *Catharmata ac Ludibria* (as a *Modern Apologiſt*) of the whole World. We find one of them ſtoned to death by thoſe, who were not able to reſiſt the *Wiſedom* and the *Spirit* by which he ſpake. At one place a Sorcerer, at another a Mechanick, and at a third a ſect of *Reſtleſs Fanaticks* revile *St. Paul.* At *Epheſus* the Tradesmen impeach him, in *Aſia* a ſort of vile Apoſtates utterly deny his power; and we cannot be ignorant, how Reverendly the Apoſtle was treated by the *Virtuoſi* at *Athens*, when they called him (*Spermologus*) an empty, idle, talkative fellow.

But the one example of our Saviour ought to ſuperſede all other in this Concern, who was deſpiſed and rejected of men, and not eſteemed of in the World; whoſe kindred ſaid he was beſide himſelf, and many ſaid he had a Devil and was mad: who by ſome was called Inchanter,

chanter, Sorcerer, and by others Samaritan, Beelzebub, Glutton, Drunkard: And to accompliſh their ſlander of his Credit, they unjuſtly Scourged and moſt Cruelly Crucified his Perſon, and *put him to open ſhame.* And to leave them without any colour of reply, they acted all this Villany againſt Chriſt, when he was preaching the Glorious Goſpel of Salvation; and therein laying down ſuch rules of *Life*, as were more enlightning of the mind, more advancing of humane Nature, and more directly tending to the Introduction and Settlement of Piety, Juſtice, and *Good-will*, among men, than was contain'd either in the Law of *Moſes*, or the Inſtitutions of Philoſophers.

Now if the Prophets, Apoſtles, and *Our Lord himſelf*, were vexed and interrupted with *Rebukes*, *Revilings*, *Deſpites*, *Contumelies*, &c. whileſt they preſſed the World to believe and practiſe the Truth; it is then abundantly clear, that the Contempt of the Clergy is no new Invention, nor to be wonder'd at as the

Monſter

Monſter of the preſent Age; but that it hath ever been the practice of *Unreaſonable men.* For there is no place or time to be met with, ſince the planting or growth of Religion, wherein its Miniſters have not by ſome been contemptuouſly intreated. And we have no great hopes to meet herein with amendment, who live in thoſe latter dayes, in which St. *Peter*, St. *Paul*, and St. *Jude*, with one mouth aſſure us; that there ſhould not only be a departure from the Faith, but alſo *Scoffers* and *Cruel Mockers*, both of the Goſpel and its Miniſters; and a Race of *Ungodly men* who would make the Goſpel it ſelf matter of *Obloquy* and *Shame* to thoſe who *preach it.* Of which ſort were thoſe Miſcreants, who put St. *Paul* upon the Apology: *I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt: for it is the power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew firſt, and alſo to the Greek.*

And therefore the preſent Clergy ought not to repine or murmur to ſee themſelves ſo badly dealt with by the World,

World, when they ſhall be ſo far recollected as to conſider, that after the ſame manner it hath alſo dealt with the Prophets, Apoſtles, and Chriſt himſelf. And it is enough for the Diſciple that he be as his Maſter, and the Servant as his Lord: If they have called the Maſter of the houſe Beelzebub, how much more ſhall they call thoſe of his Houſhold? The moſt that a Diſciple or Servant can aſpire to, is to come to his Maſters perfection. Whom if the World has reviled under the moſt hateful and ignominious Titles, it is but Reaſon for his Miniſters to expect to be proportionably dealt with, in their reſpective Orders and Places. And as Chriſt exhorted his firſt Clergy not to deſpond or be terrified by any thing ſhould befal them, but on the contrary to be Courageous and Undaunted in their Miniſtry: So the *Regular* Clergy of our own Church, ought not to let their preſent contempt damp their Spirits, depreſs their Courage, diſhearten their induſtry, or weaken their hands *in the Work of the Lord*. For duly con-

conſidered, this doth altogether oblige them to a more ſignal care, that through this Cloud of *Ignominy* and Contempt, their innocency may break forth as the Light, and their juſt dealing as the Noon-day. And with a greater zeal they ſhould now aſſert the Sacredneſs and Honor of their Calling, againſt the *Affronts* and *Prejudices* of an unpropitious and gainſaying World.

'Tis true, the contempt we ſpeak of is able to vie Antiquity with the beſt things; but the Perſons that now uſe it have no more cauſe to glory in this Antiquity, than in murder and lying, which are no leſs Ancient than the *Old Serpent*. Nor will they have greater Reaſon to vindicate themſelves upon the *Quality* of their Predeceſſors; when they ſhall ſee them to have been perſons of *Corrupt Judgments*; *Factious*, *Schiſmatical*, and *Apoſtates*. Men of the greateſt Vices, and baſeſt Intereſts; of the worſt Principles and moſt ill-govern'd Paſſions; Raſh, Inconſiderate and fooliſh in the *Things of God*. Raging Waves of the

the Sea, foaming out their own ſhame. The reſt of whoſe Character may be made out of St. *Jude*; one main end of whoſe Epiſtle was to acquaint the World what kind of perſons thoſe are who *Speak evil of Dignities*, or deal contumeliouſly with the Clergy. And St. *Peter* ſpeaking of the ſame Subject, deſcribes the Contemners to be a bold, inſolent ſort of men, 2 *Pet.* 2. 10, &c.

CHAP. IX.

A Survey of the pretences for the Contempt of the Clergy: Firſt want of Example.

THe firſt Pretence which with greateſt ſpecioufneſs and plauſibility, is brought to adjuſt the contempt of the Clergy, is the faultineſs of their carriage. For this being once ſurmiſed, we quickly find them reflected upon, with a *Phyſitian Cure thy ſelf; pluck the Beam out of thine own eye; thou that teacheſt others, why*

why doſt thou not teach thy ſelf? Thou that ſayeſt another ſhall not ſteal, doſt thou commit Sacriledge? Turpe eſt Doctori, &c. Such as theſe are the uſual Topicks whence Contempt is poured upon the Clergy in general, eſpecially by thoſe who by an Uncharitable Synecdoche impute unto all the failures of a very few: making the whole twelve to be unfaithful, becauſe one of them betray'd his Maſter. And yet were this accuſation as true, as it is manifeſtly otherwiſe; and that the Clergy were as ill-govern'd men as thoſe uſually are who deſpiſe them: Yet thoſe who reflect mens bad examples (when they may poſſibly happen) to the prejudice of their Calling, ſeem either not rightly to underſtand, or not duly to conſider what that is, which with ſo much noiſe they make uſe of.

For if they did either clearly apprehend, or maturely weigh, the nature and importance of Examples, they would certainly confeſs, that the *Bad* are utterly to be avoided, and the *Good* never to be made the *Rule* and meaſure of our *Actions*.

But

but that the beſt Examples are chiefly to be looked upon, as helps and furtherances, *Spurs* and *Incentives* to well-doing. And that when we grow dull and unactive, flat and drowſie in our duties, we may rouſe and awaken our ſelves to a greater Vigour and Fervency, by reflecting upon the Zeal and Induſtry of others. 'Tis true, Example is a very ſhort and plain way of Inſtruction; but it is true alſo, that as our actions at the laſt ſhall be *Examin'd*, *Tried*, and *Sentenced*, ſo they are now to be *Directed*, only by *Divine precept*. He therefore juſtly incurs the imputation of obeying Man rather than God, who in this caſe follows *Example* and not the *Cammandment*. Thoſe who upon this account aſſault the Clergy with no leſs clamour, than I am afraid ill-will; ſeem not always to be men of ſo much juſtice and ingenuity, as to afford that good example, they ſo loudly call for. Notwithſtanding that every one from the *Spade* to the *Scepter*, are as much obliged to an *Exemplary Converſation*, as thoſe of the

Prieſthood. For as to the influence of Examples it is proportionably the ſame in all Ranks of Men, and at the great impartial Audit accounts thereof, will undoubtedly be exacted *without reſpect of Perſons*; and the people as ſtrictly reckon'd with as the *Prieſts*. The quality of Perſons can make no Alteration in the Nature of things, nor render that a Vice or Vertue in one man which is none in another. And when men of any Rank or Condition, high or low, become defective in that Exemplarineſs of Life, which the quality and relation wherein they ſtand, require from them; then I conceive that all thoſe Coals may be heap'd upon their heads, which with ſo great impetuouſneſs are caſt upon the Clergies.

It will alſo highly import thoſe who Contemn the Clergy upon the account we now ſpeak of, to be ſoberly careful leſt by giving too much to their perſonal concernments, they make not the power and efficacy of Gods Ordinances to depend upon the Holineſs of thoſe who diſpenſe

diſpenſe them. And if in ſome meaſure men were not tainted with this Error, they would fix their eyes upon God and his Inſtitution, and look upon the Miniſters of his *Word* and Sacraments, &c. as the *Greek* Church did (in the Euchologue already mention'd:) wherein ſhe praiſeth God, that of his infinite Condeſcenſion he hath given them Maſters and Teachers, not only of the ſame Nature and like infirmities with themſelves, but alſo of like guilt and under the ſame Condemnation. And we have no ſmall obligation to be truly thankful to the Almighty, that he hath placed in the Miniſtry of the Glorious Goſpel, ſuch to offer Spiritual Oblations and Sacrifices in behalf of the people, as have a ſenſe of their Infirmities; and who in themſelves know the burden and ſubtilty of ſin. To whom our Acceſs might be the more free and eaſie, and whom we are to value according to their Office and Imployment. For who is *Paul*, or who is *Apollos*, but Miniſters by whom we believe? Even as God gave to every

man. *Paul* may plant, and *Apollos* Water: but neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the Encreaſe. If the eloquent *Apollos*, or learned *Paul*, live the holy leſſons they teach, it is their Crown & Praiſe; and likewiſe of great moment to the people, who out of weakneſs and infirmity, are hardly brought to believe the truth of that Doctrin, which is not atteſted by the Example and Practice of thoſe who preach it. But ſtill the water is the ſame, and as full of cooling and refreſhment, whether the Pipe be of Lead or Gold that conveys it. The Jewel ſuffers no diminution in its real worth or value, becauſe it is lodged in a wooden Casket. And the Goſpel of Chriſt is ſtill the power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth, though never ſo great unworthineſs attend their Perſons who declare it.

It fares with Chriſts Embaſſadors, as with thoſe of Earthly Princes, whoſe deportment, though it ſink below their Cha-

Character; yet that doth no way evacuate the power of their Commiſſion, or render ineffectual what according to their Maſters Order they tranſact in his *Name.* And that this is the plain Caſe of the Clergy, we may learn from the Bleſſed Author of Chriſtianity, in *Mat.* 23. 2, 3. And if God, whoſe ways are paſt finding out, ſhould ſet over us as *Bad Guides* as thoſe our Saviour there ſpeaks of; men who live not at all according to their own *Preſcriptions*: yet we are to reſpect their *Office* and *Doctrin*, and not their *Actions* and *Manners*; to *obſerve* and *do* what they *teach*, but not to do after their *works*: and to laud and praiſe God, that he hath ſo far conſidered the frailties of men, and *worth* of his own *Ordinances*, as not to tye the Efficacy thereof to any thing in their *Diſpenſers*, but to his own Inſtitution. St. *Auguſtin* (in his Prologue to his *Books* of Chriſtian Doctrin) obſerves, that *Paul*, though at firſt he was inſtructed by *Advice* from *Heaven*, vvas aftervvard ſent to a *Man* to receive the Sacraments, and to be

joyned to the Church: And that though an Angel declared the approbation of *Cornelius*'s prayers and Alms-deeds; yet he vvas not to reſt there, but to ſend to *Peter*, both to receive Baptiſm from him, and to be inſtructed what he vvas to believe, *Hope* and *Love*. If all things ſhould have been tranſacted by Angels, hovv mean and abject vvould this have render'd the Condition of men! Or, if God ſhould not vouchſafe to ſpeak to Men by Men, hovv could that be true, that Man is the *Temple of God* (1 *Cor.* 3.) ſeeing *Reſponſes* are not given out of that *Temple*, but that all mans inſtruction ſhould immediately ſound from Heaven? Charity vvhich doth bind men vvith the Bond of Unity, and as it vvere mix and blend minds together, would have no occaſion or opportunity for this excellent work, if there were nothing that one man might learn of another, but that all were to be done by Angels. And the ſame Father juſtly makes it a ſingular Act of *Divine* Wiſdome, to ſend the Eunuch to *Philip*, or appoint men and not Angels to inſtruct

ſtruct the Church, to conſtitute Teachers of our own Paſſions, and to diſpenſe this heavenly treaſure out of Earthen Veſſels; that the whole excellency of the power might be of God. But to proceed: Grant that the Clergy were as faulty in their Converſation as we are willing to repreſent them, yet this may move us to reflect upon our ſelves, and to conſider, whether it may not be our own fault, that our Spiritual Guides are ſo faulty; and that if we are faln under the inconvenience of bad Shepherds, whether it is not becauſe we deſerve no better. For when God told *Iſrael* that he would give them Paſtors according to his own mind, who ſhould feed them with knowledge and underſtanding, if they would ceaſe to be diſobedient Children, and turn from the evil of their ways, *Jer.* 3. 13. He plainly ſhow'd, that the way to have faultleſs Teachers, was to reform our ſelves; and to endeavour to deſerve better at Gods Hand, if in this Caſe he deals ſtrictly with us. However we cannot but ſurceaſe to contemn

our Paſtors upon the account of their failings, unleſs that we are either innocent our ſelves, or being guilty can be content to be deſpiſed upon that Score.

But yet ſeeing that a worſe Uſe is made of the Clergies, than of any other mens irregularities; and that we are generally prone to followv them in the ſteps that are fouleſt: And ſeeing that there is a *Set* of Men who are not only curious to Obſerve, but greedy to ſuck up the very dregs of their actions; and vvho ſtrive to imitate their Spiritual Guides, as the *Greeks* did their Orators and Philoſophers, only in their *Weakneſſes* and *Imperfections:* Seeing likevviſe that men are apt to make choice of the vvorſt part of the Example, and to take more notice of one ſingle miſcarriage, than of a *thouſand* good actions: And vvhat is yet more deplorable, ſeeing that contrary to all ſobriety & duty, not a fevv are forvvard to expoſe the Nakedneſs of their Fathers; and contrary to all equity and juſtice, (as in the Caſe of *Eli's* Sons) to

to abhor the ſervice of God, for the faults of the Prieſt: After theſe conſiderations, I cannot be ſo blinded vvith affection to the men I ſpeak of, as not to think it their bounden duty to give all diligence to ſhovv themſelves patterns of good works, Incorruptneſs, Gravity, and Sincerity, and to be Examples in Word, in Converſation, in Charity, in Faith, in Purity. That in ſo doing they may both ſave themſelves, and them that hear them. And at the ſame time make thoſe aſham'd, who ſpeak againſt them, as having no evil to ſay of them, or lay to their Charge. And as for thoſe (as doubtleſs ſome there may be) who do otherwiſe, *I would* (in the ſenſe and Language of the Holy Ghoſt) *they were even cut off*. But as for mine own part, when I ſee him that binds up my wounds to be careleſs of his own; that he walks in darkneſs, by whoſe Candle I am enlightned; or that he becomes a Caſt-away, who is the Inſtrument of my Salvation; I will

pity

pity his Condition, and uſe his Miniſtry as God has appointed: leaving him to receive as he deſerves, and to ſtand or fall to his own Maſter. For I dare not reproach the hand, be it never ſo Leprous, by which I am help'd to *Cleanſing*: nor inſult over their wanderings, by whoſe directions I walk aright. And though the miſcarriages of my Guide be never ſo hainous, I ſhall neither anſwer nor be puniſhed for them, if I have no way contributed to their Commiſſion.

CHAP. X.

A Survey of the Pretences of the Contempt of the Clergy: Secondly, Idleneſs.

WHat has been ſpoken in the Antecedent Chapter, may both help to rectifie a common and uſual miſtake concerning Examples in general; and alſo ſuggeſt a little more Sobriety to thoſe who

who ſo eagerly manage the ſuppoſed want thereof in the Clergy, to their irreparable *Diſparagement*. Becauſe it lets them ſee how that every tittle of their Argument may recoyle upon themſelves. And how we all (*Cæteris paribus*) are as much obliged to an Exemplary Converſation, and wanting it are as much to be blamed, as thoſe from whom vve ſo rigourouſly exact it.

But becauſe we are herein to deal vvith men, vvho uſually eſteem all ſerious conſideration meer dulneſs and drudgery; it cannot be hop'd that vvhat has been ſpoken ſhould prove much Operative upon them; or, that if it ſhould happen that the *Contemners* ſhould be ſo far moved vvith vvhat has been ſaid, as to quit this firſt pretence of their Contempt; yet their great deſire to finiſh vvhat they have begun, vvill quickly furniſh them vvith other Pretences. And here it vvill be eaſie to ſuppoſe them aſſaulting the Credit of the Clergy with the old accuſation of *Idleneſs*. Which I confeſs is a vice of ſo debaſing a quality, that

that it may juſtly leſſen the Reputation of any man who therewith is infected. And it is likewiſe ſo inconſiſtent with the Work (or Office) of the Miniſtry, that I am perſwaded there is none of that *Calling*, can thereof be guilty; or at leaſt not to that degree, which a *Maligning World* would render them.

For if we may ſuppoſe the preſent Clergy to be men of ſo much underſtanding as to know the Nature of *Idleneſs* and Induſtry: That according to a Prophet of their own, *There is nothing* more troubleſome to a *good* mind, than to do nothing. "That *Idleneſs* is no leſs devoid "of comfort than of profit. While both "are the genuine incomes of *Induſtry*. That "beſides the furtherance of their Eſtate, "the mind doth both delight and better "it ſelf by Exerciſe. That it fares with "moſt as with the man after Gods own "heart, whom no temptation durſt aſſail, "while he was taken up with buſineſs of "importance, and the publick Cares of "State, *&c.* When this and infinite more, becomes the matter of a Clergy-

mans

mans thoughts (or indeed of any) he cannot but have all Idleneſs and Sloath not only under a jealous but a deteſtable aſpect.

And yet its ſordid Nature doth not render it fitter for our avoidance than its Conſequences; which though to all are very pernicious, yet to none more than to the Clergy. As may be collected from thoſe fearful Comminations ſo frequently denounced againſt ſuch *Paſtors*, as through their Idleneſs deſtroy and ſcatter the Sheep of Gods Paſture. To whom the Lord ſaith expreſly: "I will viſit "you for the wickedneſs of your works, "and the Remnant of my Sheep will I "gather together, and bring them to their "Folds, and I will ſet up Shepherds o-"ver them that will feed them. And the "threatening reaches all thoſe Shepherds, "who take more care to feed themſelves "than the Flocks: who eat the Fat, and "Clothe themſelves with the Wool, but "look not to the ſtrengthening of the "weak, the healing of the ſick; to binde "up the broken, to bring home again that

"that which was driven away, and to en-
"quire after that which was loſt. All which Sheep the Lord hath ſworn to require at the hands of ſuch careleſs Shepherds. As may be ſeen in *Jer.* 23. and *Ezek.* 34. A great part of which Chapters was inſpired to this purpoſe. To this may be added St. *Pauls* advice to the Aſian Clergy, *Act.* 20. 28. Take heed to your ſelves and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you *Overſeers*, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood. And 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. I charge thee before God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the quick and the dead, when he appears in his Kingdome: Preach the word, be inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon, reprove, rebuke, exhort vvith all lenity and diligent inſtruction. Novv, if it be ſafe for us to preſume the Clergy both to read and vveigh thoſe dreadful Menaces, ſo frequently utter'd from God, by the mouths of his Prophets, againſt Sloath and Careleſneſs in his Meſſengers; or thoſe many earneſt

earneſt Exhortations of the Holy Apoſtles for its prevention and amendment; vve may Charitably conclude, that they vvill not dare to take part therevvith, not only for fear of mans *Contempt*, but the conſuming *Wrath* of God.

And if vve may further preſume, that there is ſo much underſtanding yet left in the Clergy, as to enable them to apprehend the greatneſs of their Task, and how it is no leſs than to raiſe up the ſaln Kingdome of Chriſt, and to demoliſh that of Satan, *&c.* and how that the fruits of ſo doing are no meaner, than the ſaving of their own ſouls, and theirs too of whom they have taken the charge, and one day muſt give an account. If we may yet further preſume, that the Clergy do in ſome tolerable manner comprehend the importance of thoſe ſeveral Titles, with which the Holy Ghoſt hath inveſted them; and how that they are as ſo many Memorials and Monitors of *Labour*, *Diligence* and *Care*. In ſhort: if we may preſume the Clergy, like other men, to wear their eyes in their heads,

heads, and apprehend and conſider ſuch obvious and plain things as we now ſpeak; it may be hoped, upon the ſtock of common ingenuity, that they will never ſuffer themſelves to run to moſs, or let Gods Houſe drop through by reaſon of the Idleneſs of *their* hands; or indure to ſee the Flocks depending upon their feeding, to grow cold in their zeal, drooping in their Courage, fainting in their Spiritual Strength, and infeebled in all their Graces. And all this to pleaſe a Vice which is unmanly in it ſelf, foully derogatory to the honor of their Calling, contradictory of their Titles, and in *Them* of more dreadful Conſequences, than it can poſſibly be in any *Other*.

In the laſt place, if we may ſuppoſe the Clergy to remember, and make conſcience of that promiſe of *Faithful diligence* which they made to God and the Church, when they were received into *Holy Orders*; this alone will be ſufficient effectually to binde them to bend their whole Endeavours, without fraud or Sophiſti-

cation,

cation, to the due diſcharge of their *Office*. Being well aſſured that ſmall benefit will accrew to the Church from their *Abilities*, if they be not *Faithful*. For the Clergy cannot be ignorant that their *Sufficiency* without *Endeavours* to do that good which their *Place* requires, is no better than wrapping the Talent in a Napkin. Induſtry with leſſer Parts is more ſerviceable to Religion, than great Learning without it. And an *Idle*, is little better than a *Blind Guide*. And being perſwaded that theſe things are the matter of the Clergies ſerious meditation, I cannot imagin they ſhould ever be guilty of that *Idleneſs* which ſo malapertly is laid at their door. But I am rather induced to believe that that which in them bears this Odious Name, is nothing elſe but the regular performance of their duty: partly occaſion'd by their Carriage, who prefer the pleaſing of ſome mens Caprices before the obſervation of their Rule. In which rank it may be no great iniquity to place all thoſe, who make all other parts of the

Church tributary to the *Pulpit*. By which they have occaſion'd a Capricious ſort of people to conclude all *Publick Service* to be *preaching*, and to eſteem all thoſe to be dumb dogs, who open not as often as they pleaſe, and in a ſenſe different to the Apoſtles, *preach* the Word in *Seaſon and out of Seaſon*. But as for mine own Part, when I obſerve our Clergy to *pray*, *preach* and *Catechize* as the Church injoyns and directs them: when I ſee them careful to ſort and feed their Flocks according to their Age and Condition, giving to every one his portion in due ſeaſon, and with fidelity, prudence and induſtry, obſerving the Rules of their Sacred Function; I cannot but think thoſe men to be forſaken both of all juſtice and ingenuity, who now contemn them upon the ſcore of *Idleneſs*. But if there be any who are herein delinquent; it were more juſtice and generoſity to give a Catalogue of ſuch Drones to thoſe who have an undoubted Power to make them *Labour*, or *Unhive* them: *And that the Righteous be not as the Wicked.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

A view of the Pretences of the Contempt of the Clergy: Thirdly of Pride.

I Shall not here attempt any Philoſophical Diſcourſe either of the Nature or Cauſes of Pride. All that concerns our preſent Enquiry falls under either the contrariety that it bears to the practice and command of Chriſt, or the danger and odiouſneſs thereof in his Miniſters.

And as to the firſt of theſe, it is ſo apparent in the Holy Goſpel, that none thereof can be ignorant who is not an *Utter ſtranger* to that inſpired Syſtem of Chriſtianity. For we plainly find therein, how the *Bleſſed* Author of Our Faith ſhows favour to none but the humble, nor will admit any to be of his retinue, who has not firſt learned of him to be *Meek* and *Lowly*. And Chriſt ſpeaking of that Prelation and Government which

was to be in his Church, he ſufficiently intimated that he would not have it to be like that of the World. That is, not a Government whoſe Dominion is Deſpotic; the *Coercion imperious*; the Laws externally Compulſory; and the Titles big and ſwelling. But on the contrary he hath inſinuated how that he would have the Government of his Church to be paternal and perſuaſive, and the Laws to be full of Admonition, and the Titles of the Governours to be ſignificative of Affection and Labour, of burden and humility: and the Higheſt Dignity, a meek Miniſtration, and a Laborious Imployment. And when the Apoſtles fell into an Ambitious quarrelling which of them ſhould be greateſt, Chriſt checkt their Pride, and gave them this Everlaſting Rule of Clerical deportment; He that will be *Greateſt among you, let him be your ſervant.* And we need come no nearer to diſcover the Odiouſneſs of Pride in Chriſts Miniſters, ſeeing both by his Example and Precept he hath thus recommended to them the clear contrary.

And

And certainly Chriſt would have thoſe who for their Greater Dignities in the Church are ſtyled Stars, and Angels, to imitate the one, by appearing leſs for their greater Height; and the other, who though Peers of Heaven, yet approve themſelves *Miniſtring Spirits* to the pooreſt of Gods Servants upon Earth.

And the ſame Rule of Clerical Deportment, laid down by our Bleſſed Saviour, is no very dark intimation, that the Clergy are in danger to fall into this ſin. And we want not reaſon to be hereof ſuſpicious, when we conſider that Pride being an internal Vice, is apt to make impreſſion upon thoſe Notions and Speculations of the mind, wherein the *Office* of the Clergy renders them more egregiouſly Converſant. For as Pride took up its firſt ſeat in a Spiritual Being, ſo it hath ever ſince acted with greateſt vigor in Spiritual Concernments, and been moſt liable to Spiritual Perſons. In whom it can never happen without working a leſs miſchief than Strife and Contention. And indeed it ſeems

impoſſible to be otherwiſe, ſeeing Pride naturally exacts it ſelf above Competition, and ſuperadds diſdain and revenge to actuate its other Motions. As was ſeen in his Caſe, who being denied a Biſhoprick ſought to be revenged upon Epiſcopacy. And as *Solomons* Arraignment of Pride for the Mother of Contention, is true in the General; ſo it is more eſpecially true of thoſe Contentions, wherewith the Church in any Age hath been afflicted: There being none to be met with wherein Pride, under ſeveral appearances, hath not been a principal Actor. And without all further Enlargement, I am ſufficiently enclined to believe, upon the account of what is now ſuggeſted, that there is no Clergyman will venture to give the leaſt Entertainment to a ſin, which is fraught with ſo much miſchief. For how tolerable ſoever this Vice may ſeem in men of another Character; yet it can never hope for any good Conſtruction in their Carriage, who are his Miniſters, among whoſe wonderful works none was more *Stupendious*

dious than his own *Humility*.

And therefore that which moſt commonly and with greateſt aſſurance, ſome men call Pride in the Clergy, ſeems to be nothing elſe, but a keeping themſelves from thoſe *Promiſcuous Familiarities*, which experience and reaſon tell them, are apt to be attended with *Contempt* and *Diſreſpect*.

Now, if upon their Separation to the Work of the Miniſtry, the Clergy betake themſelves to a Reverend and Pious Reſervation, as men profeſſing Retirement from the World above others; if out of a Conſcientious apprehenſion that an undifferenced Converſation with the Laity (of what Rank ſoever) is altogether contrary to the Calling of the Clergy; if out of fear that a too free Communion with the people will leſſen their Authority, and rebate the force of their Inſtructions and Reproofs, when there is moſt need to deliver them with the greateſt Vigor and Power; if foreſeeing that this Communion (I now ſpeak of) may engage them if not to commit,

yet often to connive at thoſe things, which they ought altogether to rebuke; and that it is one Engine to break down that Veneration, which is the Fence to their Function againſt all Popular Rudeneſs and Encroachments: if ſome (I ſay) of theſe Conſiderations, or all in Conſort, ſhall juſtly move the Clergy to ſuch a Religious diſtance and Retirement from the *Converſations* of the World, as the *Inconſiderate* may call Pride; they ought with great ſatisfaction to bear the imputation, and to account it their Crown to be contemn'd upon this Score. Eſpecially when they ſhall conſider that their Carriage herein is agreeable to the Canons, Conſtitutions and decrees of the Ancient Church, and to the Canons and Injunctions of our own; and no way claſhing with the Rules of a prudent and Charitable Conduct. As to our own Church, "She commands all Eccleſiaſti-
"cal Perſons, not to reſort to any Ta-
"verns or Ale-houſes, for any other
"cauſe, than for their honeſt neceſſities.
"And that after their Meals they ſhall
not

"not give themſelves to *Drinking* or *Riot*,
"nor ſpend their time idlely by day or
"night, at Dice, Cards, or Tables, or a-
"ny unlawful game. But at all times,
"as they ſhall have leiſure, to hear or
"read ſome part of the Holy *Scriptures*,
"or imploy themſelves with ſome other
"honeſt Studie or Exerciſe. Always
"doing the things which appertain to
"honeſty, and the Profit of the Common-
"wealth. Ever having in their minde,
"that they ought to excel all others in
"purity of life, and to be Examples to
"the people to live well and Chriſtianly.
"And there was alſo a time when the
"Clergy of this Nation was forbid to
"keep Hounds, *Accipitres & Falcones*,
"&c. And as concerning the mind of the
Ancient Church in this particular, it is
ſufficiently apparent in thoſe Canons,
which forbid the Clergy ſecular Sports
and Recreations; and all ſuch Correſpon-
dencies, Entertainments, and Familia-
rities with the Laity, as were not the
Product of their Office. And this was
done not out of any ſupercilious mo-
"roſeneſs

roſeneſs to reſtrain, but out of a wary foreſight to revere the Clergy. To whoſe profeſſion they ſaw nothing was more contrary than a too great indifferency of converſing with the people whom they were to inſtruct. With whom they muſt not hope long to enjoy that Credit and Reverence (due to their Order,) which is founded upon the Gravity, Abſtinence, Sobriety and Reſervation of their Perſons, if they licenſe themſelves that ſecular Freedom which we now plead againſt. I have obſerved a Numerous Clergy in the Roman, and not a few in our own Church, though of no greater *Parts* or *Vertues* than others, to have ſecured to themſelves a great ſhare of Veneration, chiefly upon the account of a cautious Retreat from the Uſages and Liberties of the *Many*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

A Survey of the pretences of the Contempt of the Clergy: Fourthly of Covetouſneſs.

THE laſt Pretence of the Contempt of the Clergy, which we ſhall take notice of in this diſcourſe, is their Covetouſneſs. And this imputation uſually ariſeth from a prejudiced conſideration of the Clergies carriage, Firſt, in looking after the Incomes which are appointed for their maintenance. Secondly in the frugal management of thoſe Incomes. And laſtly, in their ſeeking after Preferments.

And firſt, thoſe who Contemn the Clergy for Covetouſneſs, becauſe they are diligent and careful to look after the things which are allotted for their ſubſiſtence, may manage the ſame Argument with as much Juſtice, though perhaps not ſo much ſpeciouſneſs, againſt all thoſe

thoſe who are ſtudious to reap the due fruits and benefits of their *Places*, and Profeſſions; though they have not (all things conſider'd) ſo great an obligation for ſo doing, as the Clergy. Whom we muſt needs confeſs to be the *Stewards* of Gods *Patrimony*, as well as of his *Myſteries*: and that in both it is required of them to be found faithful. To which attribute they will have but ſmall reaſon to intitle themſelves, unleſs they be exactly vigilant to preſerve thoſe dues, rights and profits, which the Laws of God and the *Land*, have made accrew to the Church, and not to ſuffer that to be cunningly embezel'd, unjuſtly defalk'd or *Alienated*, which the *Bounty* and Religion of pious Anceſtors devoted to the ſupport and maintenance of the moſt *Holy Worſhip*. And if the Clergy ſhall be thought covetous becauſe by juſt and amicable Methods they are diligent in the preſervation of that wherewith they are intruſted: and that out of a due ſenſe that the burden of Sacriledge is already too heavy upon the Nation, they labour

to

to prevent its growing heavier, by ſaving men from that moſt execrable ſin, from which none can be free who endeavour to defraud the Church, and which not a few are ready to do, if not ſtudiouſly prevented. Now, if this be the Caſe of the Clergies Covetouſneſs in the firſt inſtance thereof, let it be left to him *That judgeth righteous judgment.*

Nor can they with any better colour brand, *As Covetous*, the Clergies wary and frugal management of their incomes, ſo long as they are merciful to their power; and that their Alms are cheerful, and their hoſpitality charitable; though they never meddle with thoſe ſecular Entertainments, and expenſive Correſpondencies, to which the occaſions of their *Office* and expreſſions of *Charity* do neither oblige nor invite them. And if the Clergy according to the beſt and Ancienteſt Canons, ſecure the intereſt of the poor in the goods of the Church, reſerving unto themſelves only ſuch a portion thereof, as may ſuffice for their own ſober maintenance, and to make honeſt

proviſion

provision for their Families, and not tenaciously to hoard them up for no better purposes than either to gratifie a covetous humour, or to furnish out a Worldly pomp and parade: or what is not much better, to enrich a Relation, that in the next Age if not sooner, will Contemn their *Extraction*, and vilify the *Function*, by which they were raised. But on the contrary, if the Clergy are conscientiously careful not to dissipate the *Spiritual Patrimony* in any needless profusions, idle curiosities, unclerical splendor, or any thing disagreable to that Christian Austerity, and *Rigor*, which is ever to be expected in that *Calling*: But shall with a *Religious providence*, and Charitable Frugality, endeavour so to husband that *Holy pittance* whereof they are not the *Proprietaries* but *Stewards*, as to be just, and Charitable; they ought upon these terms neither to be censured nor despised as Covetous. Which is an imputation never to be fasten'd upon any *Who do justice, and love mercy.* And we must think that *Order of men* we

speak

ſpeak of, to be wonderfully devoid of conſcience and ingenuity when they are guilty of any egregious failures in the things now mention'd. Eſpecially when they ſhall perceive them to be ſo equitable in themſelves, ſo anſwerable to the nature of their *Calling*, and ſo ſtrictly injoyn'd by the laws of the Church, and ſo highly recommended by all the learned and pious of their own Character and Profeſſion.

As to the *Goods* of the Church, we know, they are frequently ſtyled the *Goods* of the *Poor*; and the Ancient Church was ſo careful to maintain them in that ſtate, that ſhe allowed not a Biſhop to beſtow them upon their neareſt Relations, further than to help them as they were indigent, leſt they ſhould be ſaid to prey upon the Churches *Incomes*. I muſt take care (ſaith St. *Auguſtin*) leſt the eſtate of the poor (which belongs to the Church of *Hippo*) be given to the *Rich*. In which matter I have hitherto quit my ſelf well. For I have kindred which call themſelves *Noble*, who

who come to me being a Biſhop (one while with Menaces, and another while with Flatteries) to move me to confer ſomething upon them becauſe of our Relation, and yet through Gods grace I do not remember that I ever enriched any of them. Enough to this purpoſe is to be met with in the Canons concerning *Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline*, and in thoſe Authors who have writ *De Eccleſ. Repub.* I have been told that a late Biſhop of this Nation in his Epiſtle to *Trinity*-Colledge in *Cambridge*, (ſet before his Myſteries of Chriſtian Religion) doth impute the late Sacriledge committed in this *Land* to the ſpending of Church-means in an un-church-like manner, and that this was done by the Clergies converting them to their private uſes, or otherwiſe miſimploying them. And therefore (ſaith he) God juſtly takes them away and permits Sacriledge; we our ſelves having firſt offended in the ſame kind. For certainly Church-means ſhould have relation as well to the uſes as to the perſons; and a *Church*-man in

miſ-ſpend-

miſpending them commits Sacriledge. And I find it likewiſe expreſsly affirm'd by a Divine of *Singular Learning* and *Piety* (in his juſt weights and meaſures) that for any degree or order of the Clergy to increaſe their Eſtates out of Church-*goods*, was in the better and purer times of Chriſtianity, a thing which the Canons did not only prohibit, but make void. And that the Canons, from the Canon of the Apoſtles, to thoſe at this day in force in the Church of *Rome*, diſable the Clergy to diſpoſe of Church-goods by *Will* and Teſtament. In the 25th *Seſſion* of the Council of *Trent*, and in the firſt Chapter concerning Reformation, among many other things very worthy of remark, the *Synod* expreſsly forbids the Biſhops to augment the incomes of their Kindred and Familiars with thoſe of the Church. According to the Canons of the Apoſtles, prohibiting the Goods of the Church, which are Gods, to be given to Relations; but if they are poor, to deal with them as with the reſt of their rank; and not to diſſipate them

for their ſakes. *Imo quàm maximè poteſt, eos ſancta Synodus monet, ut omnem humanum hunc erga fratres, Nepotes, propinquosque carnis affectum (unde multorum malorum in Eccleſia Seminarium extat) penitus deponant.* And what is ſaid of the Biſhops is alſo to be underſtood of the reſt of the Clergy. 'Tis true where the Clergy (as in our own Church) are authorized to marry, the Caſe ſeems to be otherwiſe; and the Church as ſhe has given them leave to marry, muſt alſo give them leave even out of her own Revenues, to make proviſion for their Wives and Children. But this doth not abrogate but only relax the Canons: and the married Clergy are herein to expreſs a ſingular moderation; and ſo to provide for Wife and Children out of *Church-goods*, as not to extinguiſh the intereſt of the poor therein. For I humbly conceive that it is no ſmall miſtake in any Clergy-men to imagine, that having out of the *Goods* of the *Church* ſoberly diſpoſed of their Children in the World, they

they ſhould alſo labour to raiſe them Eſtates, and ſtrive in their own Port to equal that of the higher Laity. With whom the Canons never intended them a greater converſation than aroſe from the Tenor of their Function; and requires that their chiefeſt Hoſpitality ſhould reſpect the relief and ſupport of the *Indigent* and *Neceſſitous*.

As to the laſt inſtance of Covetouſneſs in the Clergy, which reſpects their eager hunting after Preferments and Promotions in the Church, which the beſt and wiſeſt have ever eſteem'd a notable blemiſh in them, it ſurpaſſeth my abilities to vindicate, and is againſt my conſcience to excuſe. And therefore I ſhall deeply lament, what I cannot redreſs; and humbly beſeech Almighty God to reſtore thoſe to a better minde, who herein are guilty. And that ſome are guilty in this particular, ſeems undeniable upon that general complaint made againſt that multiplicity of Church-preferments wherewith not few are ever ſurcharged. *Ridente fanatico, nec dolente*

Papiſta: Or rather indeed to the diſtreſs and injury of thoſe Clergy-men, who would eſteem it a good Vintage, to have but the gleanings of their *Brethren*; and think themſelves well provided for, if they had but one of thoſe *Numerous preferments* which are ſo venturouſly piled upon ſuch, as are no more laborious in the *Word* and *Doctrin* than others. But I ſhall forbear to enlarge, leſt I ſhould be miſtaken in this particular; and only make it my humble *Supplication*, that the Canons, reſpecting the Clergy in this Affair, may impartially be conſidered by them: to the end, that their manifeſt oppoſition to this enormous practice, may through God, ſomewhat contribute to its amendment; or at leaſt ſo far open their eyes, as to let them ſee the utter inexpediency, if not unlawfulneſs of what they do.

That which we call *Pluralities* in this Church, has long time been complain'd of as a thorn in her ſide; which ſome of the *Reverend Fathers* the Biſhops, have very lately been projecting to pull out.

But

But in ſtead of the Extirpation of Pluralities, I could wiſh they were well prun'd; for till their abuſes be retrenched, and they be reſtored to their firſt deſign, they will ſcarce be capable of any conſcientious Apology. And it is to be hoped that thoſe corruptions which tract of time and negligence of *ſome*, may ſeem to have brought upon the firſt Conceſſions thereof, might for the future be prevented, if three or four obvious things were duly taken notice of. As

Firſt, That thoſe unto whom the granting of diſpenſations is committed, or which otherwiſe have any ſtroke in the diſpoſal of ſuch Preferments as appertain unto Learned Men, would bethink themſelves what it is to reſpect any thing either above or beſide Merit: conſidering how hard the World taketh it, when to men of commendable Note and Quality there is ſo little reſpect had, or ſo great unto them whoſe deſerts are very mean; that nothing doth ſeem more ſtrange than the one ſort, becauſe they are not accounted of, and the other

becauſe they are. "It being every mans "expectation and hope in the Church of "God, that the only purchaſe of greater "rewards ſhould be always greater de- "ſerts, and that nothing ſhould be able "to plant a *Thorn* where a *Vine* ought "to grow.

Secondly, That Honorable Perſonages, and they who by vertue of any principal Office in the Common-wealth, are inabled to qualify a certain number, and to make them capable of benefices and faculties above others, would not ſuffer their priviledges to be abuſed, contrary to the true intent and meaning of wholeſom Laws, by men in whom there is nothing notable beſides *Covetouſneſs* and *Ambition*, *Ignorance* and *Idleneſs*.

Thirdly, That the Univerſities would beſtow their degrees not as meer kindneſſes by way of *Civility*, but as favours which always imply a Teſtimony given to the Church and Common-wealth, concerning mens ſufficiency for *Manners* and *Knowledge*. Conſidering that upon the credit of this Teſtimony ſundry Statutes

tutes of the Realm are built, and that it is ſo far available that nothing is more reſpected for the Warrant of Divers mens Abilities to ſerve both in *Church* and *State*. And if the Univerſities ſhall violate that Religion wherewith this Teſtimony ought to be given, they do not only diſparage themſelves, if it be known; but alſo involve thoſe in error, who deem it a thing uncivil to call the Credit of their Teſtimony in queſtion, by doubting either of the Manners or Abilities of thoſe, upon whom they have confer'd their *Degrees*. And therefore are never to be granted to any one without due *Caution* and *Advice*.

Fourthly, That the Indulgence of Pluralities be reſtored to its firſt deſign, by being allowed only to men of *Note*; to ſignify and reward Eminent Services done for the Church; and to encourage a more remarkable progreſs in Vertue and Science. Ends ſhamefully neglected in the preſent Indulgence of Pluralities, if we conſider who they are who moſt bountifully enjoy them.

In the laſt place, it would not a little help to the removal of the ſcandalous abuſes crept into the *Indulgence* of Pluralities, if thoſe who are ſo forward to enjoy it, would remember what in *Duty* and *Conſcience* towards *God* and the *Church* they are bound to perform. For they cannot be ignorant that thoſe to whom Plurality of Chuch-preferments is granted, are bound to requite that *Grant* by an induſtry anſwerable to that Plurality, and that they are to excel as much in *Labour*, as in Dignity and Benefit. And therefore unleſs they faithfully anſwer the Churches expectation, in bending their labours to ſow as well as reap, and to make their pains as far to exceed their Brethrens, as their Preferments and *Incomes*: in a word; unleſs they perform thoſe Offices to which the very acceptance of plural Preferments and Benefices do formally bind, let them be well aſſured (ſaith my pious and learned Author) that the Hony which they eat by fraud, ſhall turn in the end to Gall; and that which was nutriment

in

in the mouth, ſhall prove gravel in the bowels. And though their ſubtil and colourable dealing herein may not be taken in the walk of humane juſtice, yet He, the Sacred Image of whoſe Wiſdom appears in the Laws of men, will at laſt ſeverely puniſh it. And now the only Apology that can be made for the Clergy in this concern, will be their own ſpeedy endeavours to grow innocent; by avoiding all thoſe things for the time to come, which may occaſion offending. And uſing no Methods in the obtaining Church-*benefices*, but ſuch as are juſt, ingenuous and Canonical. And waving all thoſe priviledges which, contrary to the primitive Canons, give leave to hold Church-preferments in more Dioceſes than one. An abuſe (as one has well obſerved) brought in by the Papacy, when the *See* of *Rome*, ſeeking Benefices all over Chriſtendom, granted priviledges to diſſolve the Ancient Diſcipline, on purpoſe to enrich themſelves and their Favorites.

But this which is now ſpoken, has no deſign

deſign to lay *Covetouſneſs*, and therewith *Contempt*, at the door of any, who are ſtudious firſt to *deſerve*, and next to *obtain*, Plural Preferments upon the terms we have now mention'd: Nor yet to blame thoſe whom the ſcantineſs of their preſent Fortunes move to ſeek for larger, on purpoſe to enable them to perform more ſingular ſervices for God and the Church. But what has been ſaid, reſpects thoſe eſpecially who look not to be furniſh't with ſuch qualifications as are ſuppoſed by that Indulgence of the Law; which they ſo hazardouſly make uſe of, to their own *Spiritual danger*, *detriment of the deſerving Clergy*, and *Reproach* of *the whole profeſſion*, &c.

And though what hath been already ſuggeſted, may with unbyaſſed judgments, ſuffice to evince the falſneſs and iniquity of their carriage, who pretend Idleneſs, Pride and Covetouſneſs in the Clergy, to be the reaſons for which they are moved to Contemn them: Yet we may ſafely ſuppoſe that thoſe who are moſt active in this Contempt, would be

no

no otherwiſe, though the Clergy were as blameleſs therein, as the *Stars* and Angels to which they are compared; and in particulars as innocent, as was once the man without a Navel. For where the Credit and Reverence of the Miniſtry is once concern'd, it is not what they are, but what prejudice repreſents them. And beſides all this, the *Contemners* know themſelves herein to be ſafe; while they are not ignorant how the Fortitude of the Clergy is wholly paſſive, and that they are naked of all other Weapons but *Prayer* and Patience. And indeed what but Lowlineſs & Meekneſs can become his Subſtitutes, who being reviled, reviled not again; and who injoyn'd his Proſelytes in general to recompence Evil with Good, and Curſing with Bleſſing? So that theſe Contemners finding themſelves out of danger not only of Duel and Challenge, but alſo of *Recrimination* and *Reviling*, they heroically manage their province of *Diſgrace* and Contempt: whetting their tongues, and (in a harſh Metaphor) then wounding there-

therewith by Reproaches thoſe whom they know will never anſwer them at that *Weapon*. And indeed theſe Contemners, falling under the Clergies Chriſtian conſideration, will be found fitter objects of their Pity than Anger; and more proper to be pray'd for than reproach't. And I doubt not but the Clergy do zealouſly pray for their *Contemners*, as their Great Maſter did for his Crucifiers—*Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

CHAP. XIII.

A Survey of ſome of the Real Grounds of the Contempt of the Clergy.

HAving made this brief reſearch into the more uſual and troden pretences of the contempt of our preſent Clergy, and found them to be but meer pretences, ariſing chiefly from Prejudice and *Miſtake*; The next part of our Province is to enquire into ſuch grounds of this Contempt,

Contempt, as ſeem more genuin and real. Not that I ſuppoſe any true reaſon can be render'd why the Clergy as ſuch ſhould at all be contemn'd, any more than God and Chriſt, who ſhare with them in the Contempt: according to St. *Luke* 10. 16. &c. 1 *Theſ.* 4. 8. But that the true grounds of this Contempt are not the Perſonal Lapſes of the Clergy, as is pretended, but the *Nature* and *Management* of their Function.

As to the Nature of their Function, it is well known to conſiſt in turning men from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God; and to teach all thoſe who undertake Chriſtianity, to deny all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, and righteouſly and godly all the time of their being here on Earth. And as to the management of thoſe things wherein the nature of the Miniſtery conſiſts, it ought to be zealous and impartial; for as the Clergy are the Stewards of the Divine Myſteries, they are by that Title obliged to be *faithful*, which they cannot pretend

to

to be, ſhould they cry peace, peace, to thoſe whom they ſee in open Hoſtility againſt the *Prince of Peace.* But their Carriage muſt be like *Balaam's*, whom though a falſe Prophet, a houſeful of Gold and Silver could not have hired to go one jot beyond the command of the Lord.

Now when the preſent Clergy ſhall purſue the Duties of their *Calling* with that Integrity & Faithfulneſs which God requires at their hands, ill-governed men uſually deal with them, as *Ahab* with the Prophet, who with a Loyal Sincerity foretold the great Diſaſters ſhould befal him for his wicked Converſation. We read of *Herods* liſtening to the auſtere Baptiſt (and of the many good things he did at his exhortation) and how he had him in no ſmall Veneration) till he told him of his filthy Aſſociation with another mans Wife. And S. *Paul* met with no other interruption in his Diſcourſe, till he came to a cloſe reaſoning of *Continence* before *him* who lived in unlawful *Concubinage.* And long before this too, we find a Friendly and Pious Advice

vice turned to the Reproach of him that gave it. As in the caſe of *Lot*, whom the filthy *Sodomites* accuſed of Pragmaticalneſs, becauſe he meekly adviſed them to deſiſt from that more than brutal Violence and Impurity which they deſigned againſt his Angel-Gueſts. And it was the malicious Suppoſal of the *Jews*, that if reſpect was given to Chriſts Perſon, it would ſo credit his Doctrine, that all would be in danger to believe it; and to prevent this, they ſought to beat down his Reputation by calling him *Drunkard*, *Glutton*, *Mad-man*, *and Deceiver of the People*. And ſo unreaſonable are Luſt and Sin, and ſo charmed therewith are mens hearts, that thoſe who by the Powerful Countercharm of Gods Word are willing to diſinchant them, are no better treated than Chriſt by the *Demoniack*, who when he came to cure, cryed out, that he was come to torment him.

The Goſpel is quick and powerful (Vital and Operative) piercing even to the dividing of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joynts and Marrow, and able to diſcern the

the Thoughts and Intentions of the Heart. And when by this its Miniſters rip up thoſe Secret Corruptions, in whoſe Concealment and Fruition ſo many ſeem to have placed their Heaven and Felicity, it will be eaſy to foretel what great reſpect they are like to meet with, eſpecially in an Age in which moſt Offenders are of the ſame humour with thoſe *Beaux Eſprits*, or *Virtuoſi* in *Cicero*, *who were not vexed that they offended, but took it very haniouſly* to be told thereof. And when again by the ſame Goſpel, which is a *light that makes all manifeſt*, the Clergy diſcover to the Conſciences of the Wicked the Shame and Nakedneſs of their Vices; not being able to endure the Tortures naturally ariſing from ſuch a Detection, nor to deny the truth thereof, nor yet daring openly to blaſpheme the Inſtrument of the ſame Detection; their only refuge is to leſſen both the Efficacy and Credit of the Goſpel, by leſſening the eſteem of thoſe who preach it. But too rightly apprehending that Gods Word, and his Miniſters

niſters are ſuch near *Allies*, that the diſrepute of the one falls upon the other.

Now, when the Clergy (according to their Obligation) go about to cut the wings of *Pride*, and to take off the wheels of Luſt: to decry thoſe ſinful Courſes, which corrupt Nature moſt magnifies: and to propagate thoſe Vertues to which theſe Contemners have the greateſt Antipathy and Averſeneſs. When (in a word) the Clergy zealouſly recommend to our moſt Cordial Practice thoſe very Duties which we moſt diſlike, they cannot hope by this way to procure any great eſteem with thoſe againſt whoſe Vices they thus directly ſet themſelves. But on the contrary, they are to expect to be looked upon as the greateſt Enemies by all ſuch, whom they *thus tell the truth.* And indeed it has ever been the Policy of the Malicious to leſſen their Credit whoſe ſervice they would render inſucceſsful, and to imbibe mean thoughts of all thoſe who interrupt them in their Vices. But without driving this particular any further, it

is undeniably evident to the World, that one main cauſe of the Clergies Contempt may be reſolved into that Apology Chriſt upon the ſame occaſion made for himſelf, *viz. The World hateth me becauſe I teſtifie that the works thereof are evil.*

Nor doth that part of the Clergies Function, conſiſting in the inſtruction of all men in their reſpective Duties, occaſion ſome of them more obloquy, than the execution of the Sacred Diſcipline doth others. For this latter having a direct aim and tendency to ſuppreſs our darling ſins, and to put us to ſhame for their Commiſſion; we labour to beat it down with the ſame Engine, that thoſe *Factioniſts* in *Numb.* 16th uſed againſt the Prieſthood, namely, as a thing uſeleſs and unneceſſary: they indeed did ſo, upon the pretence of their own Sanctity; but we upon the ſcore of our *Stubborneſs.*

I know alas! the *Power of the Keys*, Excommunication, or Church-Cenſures, are become very contemptible, and ſunk ſo low in ſome mens opinion, that they riſe

riſe not above the Eſtimate of Artificial Fire or meer noiſy Thunder. But yet in their Original Inſtitution and Primitive Practice nothing was more high and dreadful, and it was look'd upon as a great mercy in God, and a ſingular honour for the Clergy, to confer upon them no leſs a power than to deliver obſtinate ſinners over unto Satan, to take full poſſeſſion of their Souls, and to ſentence them to the everlaſting pains of Hell: and likewiſe, a power to releaſe penitent ſouls from the Chains of Darkneſs, and Bondage of the Devil, and to reſtore them to the glorious liberty of the Sons of God; whereby they are made *Heirs* of the Kingdom of Heaven. And yet this power, whereof Angels would be ambitious, Chriſt conferr'd upon the Clergy, when he ſaid unto his Apoſtles, *Whoſe ſoever ſins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whoſe ſoever ſins ye retain they are retained.* And as theſe words give a power of publick excluſion out of the Church for *Scandalous Enormities*, and re-admiſſion into it upon *Repentance*, it undoubtedly belongs to the Governors of the Church, as they

are purely Clergy, and to none elſe whatſoever: as is evident from the firſt Collation of this power in St. *John* 20. 22. And the exerciſe of theſe Cenſures is ſo much the work of Church-Governers, that St. *Paul* calls them the Weapons of their Spiritual Warfare, by which they caſt down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledg of God, and bring into Captivity every thought to the Obedience of Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. And this *Power* in its firſt derivations was executed with ſignal *Severities*, ſuch as this Age will hardly be induced to believe; and that too when there was no Temporal *Sword* to aſſiſt theſe *Spiritual Weapons*. But it is not eaſie to adviſe what ought to be done in ſuch a State of the Church as ours is, wherein the enormities of ſome give them a ſort of impunity, who having ſeparated themſelves from the Church, are alſo in their own eſteem at leaſt, got out of the power of its Cenſures. And as to many of thoſe who ſtay within the Church, through a long for-

forbearance of this Rod, they are grown too *Heady* to be brought under Correction. And both Principles of Liberty, and a long *Uncorrected wickedneſs* are ready to diſpute all Eccleſiaſtical Reſtraints, and would rather have no Church at all, than one with *Cenſures*. But as this doth no way evacuate the *Power*, ſo neither ſhould it rebate its *Exerciſe*; but it ought to be the more prudently aſſerted, being thus unjuſtly gainſaid. However it will not unbecome ſuch as are chiefly concern'd in the management of the Church-cenſures, by no luke-warm execution thereof to ſuffer them to be looked upon as meer *Bruta fulmina*, and no ſuch proper remedies to cure the Offences in Chriſtianity, as they are pretended. And if Religion could but get ſuch countenance by a watchful menage of Church-cenſures, as to ſtrike the open ſinners with fear of being turn'd out of *Chriſtian Company*, and to be avoided as unfit for converſation; if not Conſcience yet *Reputation* would in a great meaſure reſtrain

them. Not to be thought *Fit Company* for *Chriſtians*, would ſurely make them ſcorn their Vices; and *Shame*, one deſigned effect of the Cenſures, would prevail upon thoſe by whom nobler Motives are Contemn'd. We need not be told how the Cenſures of the Church were not only laid aſide in the *Vaſtations* of the Arrian Hereſie and Perſecution; and before that in *Diocletian's* daies againſt the *Lapſi*: but we find that things were come to that extremity in St. *Paul's* time, that he was reduced to his (ὄφελον καὶ ἀποκόψονται) *I would they were even cut off that trouble you*, Gal. 5. 12. Sedition and Schiſm were grown ſo obſtinate and ſpreading, that neither his *Power* could reach, nor his methods cure them; and he was only able to *Excommunicate* the guilty in a *Wiſh*, and cut them off in *Deſire*. And much of the ſame diſtemper ſeems to be ſpread through our own Age; for though the *neceſſity* of the *times*, intereſt of Religion, and welfare of the Church, loudly call for the ſeverities of *Diſcipline*; yet there appear no ſmall

diſ-

diſcouragements againſt it, whether we conſider the Popularity of Vices, or the Power and Greatneſs of the Vitious: eſpecially when we ſee that they whoſe *Lives* and *Judgments* are chiefly to be cured with the Cenſures, have either had the reins ſo long upon their Necks, that they are grown too Head-ſtrong for Diſcipline; or they have adopted ſuch *Principles* as ſerve to adjuſt their Obſtinacy, and enable them to withſtand both Chriſt and his Church. And in this profligate State of Affairs, chiefly occaſion'd by the late and long overthrow of Government and Diſcipline, it is no eaſie matter for Church-Rulers to proceed. However we ought to be ſo far from contemning them upon this ſcore, that it is our bounden duty humbly to bow our knees to the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that he would direct and ſtrengthen the *Reverend Fathers* of *Our Church*, that they may ſupport and keep up the ſmall remainder of that Eccleſiaſtick Diſcipline, which *Schiſm*, Atheiſm and Profaneneſs, have

not yet quite trampled under foot. And that by their paternal endeavours the whole Diſcipline may in ſome good meaſure be reſtored to its primitive Efficacy and Credit, and ſo be able to accompliſh the Ends for which it was at firſt deſigned.

CHAP. XIV.

A further Examination of the Grounds of the Contempt of the Clergy, reſpecting their Condition in the World, and Extraction.

ANother occaſion of the Clergies contempt may be imputed to the indiſcreet meaſuring of their Credit according to their outward Fortunes, which generally being but ſmall their Veneration is proportionate. For men deal herein with the Miniſters of the Goſpel, as the ſcoffing *Jews* dealt with its *Bleſſed* Author, when they judged of him according to ſecular Circumſtances, and weighed him in

in the falſe Ballance of the World. *Is not this the Carpenters Son? and they were offended at him.* Their Probe pierced no deeper than the Skin, and their judgment of Chriſt being only according to the outward appearance of his Perſon, it could not be Righteous. They ſaw the *Meſſias* to be deſtitute of external *Royalty* and *Grandeur*; that his Adminiſtration was not *Lordly* and *Imperious*, but humble and perſwaſive; and his Carriage not *Big* and *Haughty*, but *Meek* and *Lowly*; and that he wanted thoſe exteriour accoutrements, wherein they expected him: and which the blind world doth ſtill eſteem only worthy Admiration and Regard. And it was upon theſe terms that they rejected the *Lord of Life*, and prefered one who murdered, before one who came to ſave them. And the condition of preſent Circumſtances renders the Alluſion but too obvious. For we find the ſame objections brought by ſome to vilify the Clergy, which were urged againſt Chriſt. And *Extraction* or *Genealogy*, which of all

all things is in it self the most insignificant, if there either be, or want personal worth, is by some warmly made use of in this Contrast. But the Clergy need not herein to Apologize, while there are other things that ennoble besides Parentage and Patrimony. For among wise Persons *Learning* was ever thought a sufficient Title to Nobless and Secular Eminence. And *A. Gellius* affirms, that not only excellency of Extraction and great Fortunes, but also *Learning* makes *Noble.* For coming (saith he) to visit *Fronto Cornelius*, as he was lying sick of the Gout, I found him lying upon his *Scimpodium Græcienſe*, *circumundique ſedentibus multis Doctrina, aut Genere aut Fortuna Nobilibus viris.* And the Lawyers affirm expressly that if a *Legacy* be given *Pauperi Nobili*, the *Executours* may give it to a *Doctor.* And the respect given to letters, hath occasion'd the dispute for precedency between Knights and Doctors of the Law, as may appear both by the Comparison that *Tully* maketh betwixt *Lucius Murena* a Knight of *Rome*, and

and *Pub. Sulpitius* a *Lawyer* (either of them ſtanding for the Conſulſhip) in his Eloquent Oration for *Murena*, and many other diſputes arguing the Caſe *to* and *fro*. And in foreign Countries where the Civil Law is in Credit, it is ſtill diſputable; though this precedency is not ſo dubitable among us, where the profeſſors of the Civil Law are ſhut up (ſaith Doctor *Ridley*) into a narrow corner of their *Profeſſion*. I produce this, only to ſhow that *Learning* and the degrees of the Schools (which are ſtill ſuppoſed to be in the Clergy) have ever been thought as fair Titles to the advantages of *Secular Opinion* and *Honor*, as any other. But as for ſuch as would leſſen the Prieſthood for the meanneſs of their *Deſcent* who bear it, they would do well to conſider, that the Laws of the *Land* render a *Fils des preſtres*, or *Baſe-born*, uncapable of that Sacred *Office*, unleſs by the interpoſition of the Royal Prerogative. And that in the Ancient qualifications of thoſe who were to be admitted to Holy Orders, all Bondmen, Accomptants,

comptants, and men diſtorted or deform'd in body, as alſo Bigamiſts, were excluded. Next, that in all Orders of men it is the *Office*, Authority and Calling, that are chiefly to be looked upon. In reſpect of all which the Clergy are undeniably as conſiderable as any Rank of men whatſoever. And laſtly, that *Learning* and *Manners*, are chiefly required for admiſſion into Holy Orders. It is true, that eminence of *Birth* gives no ſmall luſtre to the Clergy, and when *Perſons* of *Quality* enter upon the Prieſthood, they become as greater Stars which brighten up the *leſs*. And though Birth and *Deſcent*, &c. be inconſiderable in reſpect of God, yet *Vertue*, Learning and Religion are rendred more Illuſtrious when therewith accompanied. And though likewiſe the Sacerdotal Office be in it ſelf, and alone, ſufficient to give Credit and Repute to the loweſt Deſcent of men, who duly undertake and diſcharge it; yet it is no little Honor and Felicity for the Church, not only to have Kings for her Nurſing-Fathers, but alſo

alſo *Nobles* for her *Prieſts*. But yet ſtill none are either *too High* or *too Low* for Holy Orders, whoſe *Graces* and *Abilities* qualify to undertake *them*. And albeit thoſe are more to be honor'd who beſides *Vertue* and *Learning* bring into the Clergy Eminence of Parentage, yet thoſe are not to be contemn'd who come without it. There being enough in the very Nature and Original of the *Office*, to procure them reſpect and reverence who bear it. Whom according to St. *Paul*, we are to eſteem very highly in love for their works ſake. Or, to pay them all poſſible reſpect for the pains that they take among us. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 12, 13.

But if to what has been already ſpoken, all the real grounds of this *Contempt* be not reducible; then what is wanting may be too juſtly reſolved into the decay of Reverence to Religion and Obedience to God. And now it is not *Vertue*, *Piety*, *Learning*, *Induſtry*, *Juſtice*, *Liberality*, nor all that can be imagin'd to fit the

the Clergy for reſpect, that can procure it them, with thoſe who have thrown off all *Loyalty to God* and *Reverence to Religion*. Againſt whom it is vain otherwiſe to Apologize, than with *Tears* and *Prayers*.

But there are yet two things more, which (in regard of preſent Circumſtances) are acceſſory to the Contempt we ſpeak of. The firſt is the carriage of Diſſenting Teachers, who by ungentile Arts labour to leſſen the eſteem, and therewith the ſerviceableneſs of the Orthodox Clergy. Who contrary to their Pretences of greater Conſcientiouſneſs, blow into the heads of their *Unwary Sectaries*, that all but themſelves are ſuch a Monſtrous Clergy, as would affright you to mention. And indeed the infuſing their Proſelytes with ſpiteful and uncharitable prejudices againſt the Regular Clergy is one main engine wherewith they ſo cloſely inſinuate themſelves into *Their affections*; with whom the ſtrength of their own Credit chiefly conſiſts in weakening that of

their

their Brethrens. The guilt and injuſtice of which Carriage is ſo open to the *World*, that there is no need further to animadvert. And though methinks better things might be expected from men who pretend to make ſuch conſcience of *Their wayes*; yet I could wiſh that only Diſſenters were herein to be faulted: and that among the conforming Clergy themſelves, none were to be met with, to encreaſe the cry, and ſpeak evil of the things they underſtand not. Which certainly is their unhappineſs who either by their own opinions or by ſquint reflections upon thoſe of others, occaſion many to grow jealous that all the *Conforming Clergy* are not ſo Orthodox as we believe. Which Carriage in thoſe who would be accounted both, is both ſo un-Chriſtian and unpolitick (as being foully derogatory to the Sacred Rule they profeſs, and tending ſo greatly to the inhancement of their Contempt) that it may ſeem ſtrange any one ſhould thereof be guilty, who are either truly *Pious* or *Conſiderate*. And if

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any who reading this intimation, by reaſon of their own Conſciouſneſs ſhall take it to themſelves, I humbly pray God it may turn to their amendment.

Another ſort of men egregiouſly aſſiſting to this Contempt are, the Roman Miſſionaries, who though not ſo ſollicitous as the former to beſpatter the Perſons of our Clergy, yet what is more for their purpoſe, they labour to make void their Orders (and thereby their whole Service) by inſtilling into their eaſie proſelytes a belief, That ever ſince our departure from *Rome*, we have been without an Ephod and without Teraphim: all Prieſthood properly ſo called. And though this perhaps may neither be practiſed upon Vulgar Perſons, nor at all come within their Cognizance, yet it is more than probable that they deal and ſucceed herein with thoſe, who are able to bring moſt damage to our Church, and advantage to their own.

And thus having with that plainneſs and

and brevity, which was at firſt deſign'd, given you an Eſſay both of the *Real* and *Pretended Grounds* of the Contempt of the Clergy; I have as it were only worded the Diſeaſe, ſo that it ſhould be our next task to preſcribe ſomething in order to its Cure. And though according to preſent Circumſtances, this may ſeem to be placed next to impoſſible; yet it is to be hop'd that it would not a little contribute to mitigate and allay the fury of the *Diſtemper*, if both *Lay* and Clergy would ſeriouſly lay to heart what has I hope with *Modeſty* and *Conſcience*, *Truth* and *Integrity* been already mention'd. And what I have now to ſpeak more upon this *Unwelcome Subject*, ſhall be by way of very *ſhort addreſs* unto three ſorts of Perſons, who are herein more eſpecially concern'd.

And my firſt addreſs ſhall be to the Magiſtrate that he would not ſuffer the Clergy to be contemn'd, if not for the ſake of their Function, yet for the *Peace* and *Safety* of the *State*. For if by an atheiſtical ſuppoſal it ſhould be granted,

That Religion is but a meer Engine of Government, or a politick invention deviſed to awe the people into ſubjection and obedience, and thereby very proper to turn the affairs of the World: yet that Religion may be able to effect theſe purpoſes, there is a neceſſity of diſtinct Perſons to inſtil into the people a belief and fear of the *Inviſible Powers*, and this diſmal apprehenſion of a future State, or the World to come. And to ſhow them how that theſe inviſible Powers have decreed and appointed that all ſorts of Perſons ſhould be ſubject to the viſible higher Powers upon Earth; and how that they will certainly and fearfully puniſh all ſuch as do otherwiſe. So that it now becomes the intereſt of the Magiſtrate to aſſert the Credit and Authority of thoſe upon whoſe Miniſtry ſo much of the common welfare depends. And to take care that Perſons thus imployed, have ſuch a Veneration and regard ſhown them, as may render them competent to perform theſe good Offices for the State. If the honoring

noring of Religion brings *Greatneſs*, and the vilifying thereof ruin, to a Nation; and that Religion cannot be honor'd, where its Miniſters are deſpiſed: then let thoſe who bear any tolerable *Good-will* unto the Land of their Nativity, take heed of making but a Mock of that Carriage which may prove no leſs fatal to its happineſs, than it did to the *Jews*; in whom God puniſhed the Abuſe of his Meſſengers with the *Deſolation* of their Temple, and *irreverſible Diſperſion* of their whole *Nation*.

When Princes granted to Clergy-men Authority to hold *Conſiſtories*, it was becauſe they thought it uncomly for them to follow matters of *Suits* abroad, to the great diſtraction of their Prayer and exerciſe of Divine Service. As alſo that they might have a more ſpeedy and better diſpatch before a *Judge* of their own Learning, than before a Judge of another Profeſſion. And that their ſuits and quarrels ſhould not be divulged and ſpread abroad among the Lay-people, to the great diſcredit of their whole

Calling. And we read that in Criminal matters, Princes anciently ſo much tender'd the Clergy, that if any man among them had committed any thing worthy of Death or open Shame, he was not executed or put to publick diſgrace, before he was degraded by the Biſhop, and his Clergy; and ſo was executed, and put to ſhame, not as a Clerk, but as a Lay-Malefactor. Which reſpect towards Eccleſiaſtical men, 'twere well it were ſtill retain'd, both becauſe (ſaith a Great Civilian) the conſideration thereof is reverent and vvorthy the dignity of the Miniſtery, vvhoſe Office is moſt honorable; and alſo for that it is more Ancient than any *Papiſtical immunity*; and let me adde alſo, becauſe it highly tends to the honor and advancement of Religion, and conſequently to the ſtrength and ſafety of the Common-wealth.

And though inſtead of bearing any ſuch reverence to Gods Miniſters, the preſent Age ſeems to reckon it among its *Wonderful Accompliſhments* to contemn *Them*; yet if ever the ſad effects there-

thereof fall under the mature and ſerious conſideration of the Magiſtrate, I doubt not but the ſenſe of his own and the publick ſafety, will awaken his endeavours to ſet ſhores to that inundation of miſeries which from an uncontrolled vilifying of the Officers of Religion will naturally flow, and unavoidably break in upon, and deluge the *Land*.

My next addreſs is to the *Contemners themſelves*: whom I would heartily requeſt to conſider, how their vilifying the Clergy is contrary to the general practice of the World: There being no Nation ſo utterly ſavage and uncivilized, whoſe reſpect to their Prieſts doth not rather incline to exceſs than *deficiency*. Next I would humbly beſeech them to revolve how their Carriage herein is wholly opponent to that Common Equity, which obligeth us to yield *All* a reſpect agreeable to the Eſtimate the *Laws* of the *Place* have put upon the *Office* they bear. And here I cannot but likewiſe ſuggeſt who thoſe are whom they contemn; and

how that in every *Spermologus*, or idle, babling, talkative Clergy-man, (for ſo the *Wits* of *Athens* called St. *Paul*) there is an Ambaſſador of Chriſt. 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. And all know an Ambaſſador ſuſtains his Princes Perſon, and negotiates his affairs. And that the King is ſaid, in our uſual diſcourſe, to do that, that his Ambaſſador doth in his Name. And the reſpect or affront done to an Ambaſſador, interpretatively is done to the *Perſon*, whom he repreſents. Which is all applicable to the Ambaſſadors of Chriſt, for what *They* do, *He* is ſaid to do; and the diſhonor done to them, God takes as done to Himſelf (1 *Sam.* 8. 7. They have not rejected you, but they have rejected me) and our Saviour told his Diſciples, when He Commiſſion'd them to Preach in his *Name*, He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that ſent me, *Mat.* 10. 40. He therefore that deſpiſeth them, deſpiſeth not Men, but God. 1 *Theſ.* 4. 8. According to that uſual ſaying among the *Jews*, *Every mans Meſſenger is as himſelf.*

ſelf. And give me leave to tell you (who are the Contemners of Chriſts Ambaſſadors) that they are more deſerving of your reſpect than *Thoſe* of *Earthly Princes*, as repreſenting a Maſter, whoſe *Power* and *Greatneſs*, as much excel that of Secular Kings, as God doth all the Sons of Men. For they are the Ambaſſadors of the Lord of Hoſts. *Mal.* 2. 7.

They are likewiſe intruſted with greater *Secrets* than thoſe of *State*, even with the *Great Myſtery* of godlineſs, God manifeſt in the Fleſh, which had been hid from all Ages, and which the Angels deſired to look into. They likewiſe were not, as other Ambaſſadors are, ſent to particular Nations, and upon particular Concerns; but unto all the *World*: and upon a Meſſage of no leſs importance than to make up the grand Breach, and to reconcile God and Man. And we may ſtill obſerve that they have no other deſign upon us, than to open our eyes, and to turn us from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. That we may receive forgive-

neſs of ſins, and inheritance among them that are ſanctifyed by Faith that is in Chriſt. And ſeeing that this is the undoubted tenour of the Commiſſion they receive for their Ambaſſy, and that they negotiate nothing but the welfare and happineſs even of their *Contemners*, this might move them to retract their Contempt upon the ſole account of its injuſtice and *Diſingenuity*. For what can more worthily bear that imputation, than to deal ill with thoſe, who wiſh us no worſe than to be Eternally happy: and who with the ſame devotion and integrity endeavour our *Salvation* as they do their own? Indeed if they went about to abridge us of any *Honeſt* comfort or delight; or of what is either agreeable to our *Rational* Nature, or ſoberly conducing to a healthful and comfortable life: If they inſtructed us to caſt our Wealth into the Sea, when there are other ways enough to ſave us from being drown'd: If they forbad us any thing, but what will do us hurt; or injoyn'd us any thing but the practice of thoſe

thoſe Vertues which have ever been juſtly accounted the beſt *Tryals* and *Exerciſes* of *Brave and Generous Spirits*; and fitteſt to keep *Men* from *Sinking* into *Bruits*. Then we might have ſome colour to invert the Scripture, and to revile them for their *Works ſake*. But being clearly aſcertain'd of the contrary; and that they manage their Office according to its genuine deſign, namely, to ſave their own ſouls, and the ſouls of them that hear them: We cannot without the priviledge of *Lunacy*, and ſcandal of *Ingratitude*, either expoſe their Perſons, or vilify their Function. As for mine own part, it has ever hitherto exerciſed my wonder, that men ſhould run ſo far Counter both to God and themſelves, as to deſpiſe thoſe whom God will honor; and undervalue thoſe who are ſo ſerviceable to them in their higheſt concern, and principal intereſt.

But leaving theſe men to cure this their diſtemper'd Carriage towards the Clergy, with a conſiderate reflection upon the baſeneſs and ungentility of ſo doing:

ing; I will conclude theſe tumultuary Papers, with a ſhort application to thoſe Reverend Perſons, to the aſſertion of whoſe *Honor* they are really intended.

And here I would not be thought to be one of thoſe who are *Wiſer* than their Teachers; an imputation not poſſibly to be avoided, if I ſhould go about to inſtruct them. My purpoſe therefore is in this place to perform the Office of an humble Remembrancer; and to mind thoſe Reverend Perſons, (to whom in all Submiſſion I make this Addreſs) as far as poſſible, and it in them lyes, to give no occaſion to their Enemies *to ſpeak evil of them.* And though I know you have no Locks upon their hearts, nor Bits in their mouths, but that their thoughts are free, and their tongues are their own; yet you want not ways conducing to their *Reſtraint*, and to ſilence the Obloquy of ſuch unreaſonable men: Namely,

Firſt, A prudent care that no egregious miſgovernment of your Perſons render

der your Calling leſs acceptable; but labouring that in all things your Holy Office may be adorn'd with an anſwerable Converſation. For it is the well governing of your ſelves that will embolden you in the reproof of others miſcarriages, and give Authority to your Doctrin. And by doing the ſame things you teach, you ſhall give an undeniable atteſtation that they are not ſo difficult in themſelves, nor humane Nature ſo far weakned and depreſſed, but that all the Duties of Chriſtianity may be performed. But if like Mercurial Statues, you never move a foot toward the place to which you direct others; this may create in the *Laity* a ſturdy ſuſpicion, that the whole matter is but a holy Cheat. Let your own breaſts then be the firſt *Proſelytes* of your Doctrin; and let your Miniſtry firſt manifeſt its power in making your ſelves good. *Non aliter viventes quàm vivendum præcipientes*: which was neglected by thoſe Philoſophers, who (ſaith *Seneca*) deſerved ſo ill of Mankind. Always remembring how ill

it

it becomes Divines to be like those Philosophers in *Epictetus*, who were Ἄνευ τῶν πραγμάτων, μέχρι τῶν λόγων, *Factis procul, Verbis Tenus*; as *A. Gellius* makes the remark. *Lib.* 17. *Chap.* 19.

Chaucer in the Prologue, to his *Canterbury* Tales, gives the Character of a Religious and Learned Priest. Which being not wholly impertinent to that we speak of, I have here inserted in his own Language and Metre.

The Parson.

A good manne there was of Religioun,
And was a poore Parsone of a Toun:
But rich he was of holy thought and werke,
He was eke a lerned manne ȝ a Clerke,
That Christes Gospels truly would preach;
His Parishens devoutly would he teach.
Benigne he was and wonder diligent,
And in adversitie full patient;

And

And ſuch one he was proved oft tithes,
Full loth were him to curſe for his tithes;
But rather would he yeven out of doubt
Unto his poore Parithens all about,
Both of his offring and of his Subſtaunce,
He couhie in little thing have ſuffiſaunce.
Wide was his Parith and houſes fer aſonder,
But he ne left neither for raine ne thonder,
In ſickneſſe ne in miſchiefe for to viſite,
The ferdeſt in his Parith, moch or litte,
Upon his fæte, and in his hand a ſtafe:
This noble ertample to his ſhepe he yafe,
That firſt he wrought, and afterward taught,
Out of the Goſpel he the words caught,
And this figure he added eke thereto,
That if Gold ruſt, what ſhould Iron do?
For yef a Priеſt be foule, on whom we truſt,
No wonder is a leude man to ruſt;

And

And ſhame it is, if a Prieſt take kepe,
To ſe a ſhitten ſhepherd, and a cleane
ſhepe:
Well ought a Prieſt, enſample for to
yeve
By his cleanneſſe, how his ſhepe ſhould
liue.
He ſet not his Benefice to hire,
And let his ſhepe acomber in the mire,
And renne to London, to Saint Poules,
To ſeken him a Chauntrie for ſoules:
Or with a Brotherhede to be withold:
But kept at home and kept well his fold,
So that the wolfe made him not miſ-
carry,
He was a ſhepherd, and not a mercenary.
And though he holy were, and vertuous,
He was not to ſinfull men deſpiteous,
Ne of his ſpæch daungerous ne digne,
But in his teaching diſcrete and benigne,
To drawne folke to heaven, with faire-
neſſe,
By good enſample, this was his buſi-
neſſe.
But he were any perſone obſtinate,
Whether he were of high or low eſtate,
him

Him would he ſnibbe ſharply for the Novis,
A better Prieſt I know no where non is.
He wayted after no pompe ne reverence,
Ne maked him no ſpiced Conſcience;
But Chriſtes lore, and his Apoſtles twelve,
He taught, but firſt he followed it himſelve.

And though the excellent *Chaucer*, as appears by his writings, met not with many of this Character; yet the Hiſtory of thoſe Times repreſents the Religiouſneſs of the Clergy (eſpecially the Regular) and the peoples Reverence towards them to have been highly commendable. And that the Clergy ſerved God in continual prayer, watching, faſting, and preaching the word of life; deſpiſing the Commodities of the World, as things that were none of their own; being content with ſo much thereof as might ſerve their neceſſities; living themſelves according to what they taught others. For which the people had them in a marvel-

marvellous Reverence, freely imparting to them of the chief of their Subſtance. And in ſo doing conform'd to the primitive Rule and Practice of Chriſtianity.

It was St. *Pauls* Exhortation to *Timothy*, that he *Should take heed to himſelf and to his Doctrin*: And the former advice ſeems to have been equally neceſſary and important with the latter. For the looſe and ill-govern'd life of a Divine doth uſually more hurt, than his preaching doth good: there being nothing doth more effectually imprint the *Leſſons* of Holineſs and Vertue upon the people, than the exemplary Converſation of their Teacher: the later having ever had a greater force upon *The Many* than the Former. And indeed it was the ſignal care of the Apoſtles *To live as they preached*, that at firſt made Chriſtian Religion ſo ſucceſsful and prevailing in the World. And none could reaſonably doubt of the Truth of that Doctrin, and neceſſity of thoſe duties, in whoſe conſcientious belief and performance, the Preachers thereof were ſuch *Fair Examples*.

amples. Remember what Chriſt ſaid to your Holy Predeceſſors, when he was training them up for the Miniſtry: "*Ye* "*are the Salt of the Earth*; but if the Salt "hath loſt its ſavour, wherewith ſhall "it be ſalted? It is thenceforth good "for nothing, but to be caſt out, and "to be trodden under Foot of men. "*Mat.* 5. 13.

The poſition of the *Syriack* Scholiaſt tranſlated out of the *Syriack* Language by *D. L.* hath theſe words upon *Levit.* 4. 3. "If the Prieſt that is anointed, *&c.* "In the *Greek*, if the high Prieſt, he who "is anointed, ſhall ſin, ſo as to make the "people to ſin (*i.e.*) they imitating "him, and offending in the ſame kind, "the whole Congregation ſhall offer an "Oblation, a young Bullock for his ſin. "*i. e.* All the people when they offend "offer the ſame Oblation only, which "the Prieſt did when he offended. "And therefore it is ſaid, that the tranſ-"greſſion of him who ſtandeth in an "high place, ought to be reputed, as if it "were the ſin of all thoſe who ſtand "under him.

"And if a Ruler ſhall ſin, his Oblati-
"on is leſs than that of the Prieſt, or
"that of the Congregation all together:
"nor was he ſprinkled with blood ſe-
"ven times, by reaſon of his Prero-
"gative of Honor; and though in ſome
"reſpects the Prince himſelf be leſs than
"the Prieſt, and the people do far ex-
"ceed him in Number; yet he is greater
"than any one of the Congregation,
"and therefore every one of them of-
"fending offereth a *Female*, but he a
"*Male-kid*, *Levit.* 4. 22, 23, 24. The deſign of inſerting this poſition will not need to incur the mark of *Impertinency*, when it is conſidered to whom upon this occaſion it is addreſſed.

And as that which I have now rudely ſuggeſted, will prove one infallible method to ſecure your Eſteem; ſo it will likewiſe furniſh you with courage in the diſcharge of your Function. For nothing doth ſo much animate the reproof of anothers faults, as a *Nil conſcire* in the Reprover. And ſeeing it is your unhappineſs to live in an Age, wherein

Vice

Vice is arrived at that *Aſſurance* and Power, that it may ſeem no ſmall piece of Valour to be Vertuous your ſelves, or to counſel others to be ſo; there appears all imaginable reaſon that courage draws you out to aſſault and batter the ſtrong holds of ſin, and to conflict wickedneſs in High Places. And when your Courage is the Child of your own *Innocency*, it will infuſe a marvellous vigor and ſpirit into every Branch of your Office, *So that you may ſpeak and exhort, and rebuke with all Authority.* And preſent Circumſtances being duly weighed, your Caſe will plainly appear to reſemble that of *Ezekiels*, when God ſaid unto him, *Ezek.* 2. 6.

Son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though Briars and Thorns be with thee, and thou doſt dwell among Scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be diſmayed at their looks, though they be Rebellious, *&c.*

Behold, I have made thy face ſtrong againſt their faces, and thy forehead

ſtrong againſt their foreheads, *&c. Chap.* 3. 8, &c.

And give me leave to ſhut up all with commending to your Conſideration, the ſharp and known invective of that excellent Heathen againſt the vicious Philoſophers, in the ſecond Book of his Tuſculan Queſtions. *Quotus quiſque Philoſophorum invenitur, qui ſit ita moratus*, &c. *Artemque Vitæ profeſſus delinquit in vita*, &c. He is like a profeſſed *Grammarian* ſpeaking barbarouſly, or a ſcurvey Singer vaunting of his skill in Muſick. Nothing being more abſurd and ridiculous than to be defective in the knowledge of that in which a man profeſſeth himſelf to be a *Maſter*, *&c.*

Ad majorem Dei Gloriam.

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